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C DIFF SCANDAL BOSS LOSES HER BID FOR PAY-OFF

■ BY ANNA WHITE

THE disgraced former chief executive at the helm of Maidstone Hospital during the superbug scandal that led to the deaths of 90 patients has lost her pay-off claim.

Rose Gibb sued Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust for breach of contract after it refused to pay her the full £250,000 severance pay.

She claimed she had been made a "scapegoat" over the scandal, but the judge at the High Court, Mr Justice Treacy, yesterday dismissed her claims and ordered her to pay costs, which for the trust alone are expected to be £90,000.



DEFEATED: Rose Gibb's claim for severance pay were dismissed at London's High Court

Ms Gibb left the trust days before a highly critical Healthcare Commission report into two outbreaks of

Clostridium difficile at the trust's hospitals during 2004 and 2006, was published in October 2007.

The report from the watchdog cited management failings and poor hygiene control for the outbreaks of the superbug at Maidstone, Kent and Sussex, and Pembury hospitals.

Court papers showed when Ms Gibb learned she was being forced from her job she originally aimed for a severance package of £300,000, which was then reduced to £250,000.

At the time of the scandal, Health Secretary Alan Johnson stopped the trust giving Ms Gibb the six-figure payout, instead she received £75,000 – half of her salary as chief executive.

She claimed the trust had breached her contract and that if she had known she would not receive the full

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



CELEBRATIONS FIT FOR A SAINT

Families were treated to a weekend of colourful medieval celebrations in the county town to mark St George's Day.

The patriotic events got under way on Thursday with a parade through the town centre, which featured schoolchildren, a brass band and Indian drummers.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 4



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£45,000 job to help council cut back spending

EXCLUSIVE

■ BY EMILY HALL

THE council has been slammed for bidding to save money – by employing a £45,000-a-year partnership manager.

Maidstone council wants to employ a money-saving guru to help it – and four other local authorities – get through the current economic woe.

But the job comes with benefits and a juicy pay packet of up to £45k – nearly £20k more than the average full-time Maidstone dweller earns.

The position would see the lucky candidate heading up the Mid Kent Partnership, a group of councils including Maidstone, Ashford, Swale and Tunbridge Wells, as well as Kent County Council, which recently lost millions when the Icelandic banks collapsed.

The jargon-filled job brief described the partnerships as a “progressive and committed group of local authorities... working together to improve services and deliver savings.”

It went on: “We are now looking for someone who can work with the senior members and officers to drive this programme of work forward, develop new business cases and see proposals through to implementation.”

The job has been created to try to tackle the crunch effect on local authorities struggling to keep frontline services despite losing cash from fewer people using things like town car parks and swimming pools.

The post holder will be employed by Maidstone council, but will work to “improve efficiency” for all five authorities during the one-year contract.

But some residents have criticised what they see as the “huge” salary.

Dan Lock, who lives in Maidstone and earns less than £20,000 a year, said: “It’s good they’re trying to save



HIGH PRICE: The money-saving guru selected will earn more than double that of the average Maidstone resident

money, but galling for people like me who work really hard and still struggle to make ends meet.”

Matthew Elliott, chief executive of the Tax Payers’ Alliance added: “If the council is serious about delivering savings to taxpayers, they should cut out waste from their budgets and hire less faceless bureaucrats. We’re in a recession, and it’s high time those at the council started tightening their belts like the rest of us.”

But a Maidstone council spokesman said whoever clinched the position would have to bring savings if they were to keep their job. “The post holder will make savings worth many times their salary.”

“The programme manager will work with the councils to identify savings and future shared service opportunities.”

“This is a one year contract in the first instance and the salary reflects the savings the post holder is expected to achieve. This job will pay for itself many times over.”

The deadline for applications for the post has now closed.

yourmaidstone NEWS IN BRIEF

Muggers kicked and punched man on floor

A 49-YEAR-old man was left needing hospital treatment after he was mugged by three teenagers.

The man was walking home from the railway station through the alleyway from Commercial Road to Old Kent Road, in Paddock Wood, on Friday, April 17, when he became aware of three teenage males at the Old Kent Road end.

As the man approached the group they said something to him before pushing him to the floor and starting to punch and kick him.

He suffered a head injury and required hospital treatment as a result of the assault.

The man’s wallet was taken from his pocket during the attack.

Prospective MP calls for Gurkhas support

LIBERAL Democrat hopeful Peter Carroll is calling on MPs to help overturn new settlement criteria which could see thousands of Gurkha veterans deported.

Campaigners have hit out at the recent announcement that retired Gurkha soldiers who served for the British Army before 1997 will not be able to stay in the UK unless they meet new criteria.

The parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and Weald at the next General Election, who is also one of the founders of the Gurkha Justice campaign, has called on the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives to join forces against the decision.

Charity runs hit target

ORGANISERS of the Race for Life are “delighted” that thousands of women have signed up to fill all of the spaces for both Maidstone events.

Cancer Research UK has hit its target of signing up 8,000 mums, daughters, grandmothers and sisters to walk, jog or run 5k, in two events in Mote Park.

The first of the races being held at the Maidstone park will be on Sunday, May 17 and the second on Sunday, June 7.

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Relief as rescue plan saves farmers market

Stallholder pleased with support given

■ BY ANNA WHITE

A POPULAR farmers market has been saved from closure after county council bosses and another market came to its rescue.

The future of West Malling Farmers Market was first threatened when its management company Hughmark collapsed.

This blow was followed by Tonbridge and Malling council withdrawing its £7,000 per year funding and failing to renew the road closure arrangement which allows the market to go ahead in the High Street.

Rescue talks began when Steve Woods, of Meopham Farmers Markets, contacted Liberal Democrat councillor Trudy Dean, who represents Malling Central at Kent County Council, with an offer to run the market.

Cllr Dean then approached KCC leader Paul Carter, who agreed to put up funding to keep the market going for two years to allow time for a new organisation to be put in place.

The rescue deal has received support from West Malling parish council and Malling Action Partnership, who have pledged to pay towards better advertising and set up a support group.

Bob Taylor, of Kent Farmers Markets, and



STILL TRADING: Tracy Robertson with her family buying goods from Steve Woods at West Malling Farmers Market

Julie Monkman, of Produced in Kent, also stepped up to offer their support to get the West Malling market back up and running.

To ensure it can still go-ahead in its usual location in the High Street and at the same time of 10am to 2pm, KCC officers made sure they had secured a new road closure before the April market, which was held on Sunday.

Cllr Dean said: "It has been a real rollercoaster, but I am delighted to say the market will now continue as before. I am very grateful to Paul Carter and Meopham Farmers Markets

for coming to the rescue. We have two years to put the market on a firm financial footing.

"Other businesses in West Malling are starting to open up so they can really benefit from visitors to the market."

Speaking at Sunday's market Mr Woods, who runs the Love Chillies stall, said: "I am so grateful to Trudy for helping us out and using her contacts to make sure the market stays, we couldn't have done it without her."

The market takes place on the fourth Sunday of every month.

Ex-NHS chief not allowed to appeal

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

payment she would not have left.

During the ruling at the London court on Tuesday morning, Ms Gibb was also refused permission to appeal.

After the hearing the NHS trust's new chief executive Glenn Douglas said: "We welcome the court's decision which supports the view of the trust and the NHS as a whole."

"This high-profile case has been the cause of anxiety for many people and I hope this brings some comfort to them. It is the right decision."

Apology

"We would again like to publicly apologise for what happened during the C-diff outbreaks that occurred while Ms Gibb was chief executive of the trust."

"Under new management and with new procedures and strict infection control measures, we have subsequently achieved some of the lowest infection rates in the country."

"Our priority is and will continue to be to provide safe, high-quality care for our patients."

Police find runaway pilot who admitted cannabis charges

A PILOT who went on the run after he pleaded guilty to several drug charges has been found in Somerset.

Police issued a warrant for Sid Clark, of Tonbridge Road, Barming, after he failed to turn up to his hearing at Maidstone Crown Court in February.

The 48-year-old was due to face charges of production and possession of cannabis, and abstraction of electricity. The case came after air accident investigators released a report into Mr Clark's plane



FOUND: Sid Clark is now in police custody

Barming, and passenger Tim Des Vignes, 53, a convicted drug smuggler on day release from prison, suffered only minor cuts and bruises.

After the crash Mr Clark said he had been taking his friend Mr Des Vignes on a "pleasure flight" to Dover and back as a treat.

Police raided his home several days after the crash where they found 300 cannabis plants and arrested Mr Clark on suspicion of growing cannabis.

Officers from Kent Police's East division of the Serious Organised Crime Unit made in-depth enquiries to locate Clark.

Kent Police worked with Avon and Somerset Police and a house in Farthing Common, near Hythe. The impact sent the plane plummeting to the ground in the back garden of the property owned by an elderly couple.

He has been remanded in custody until his next court appearance on May 8.

Protestors invite you to join march

HUNDREDS of campaigners are expected to take part in a march on Bank Holiday Monday in protest against the proposed Kent International Gateway.

The demonstration has been organised by StopKIG, a pressure group determined to save the green space earmarked for development under the controversial scheme. Protestors will gather on Bearsted Green.

A planning meeting will be held three days later at Maidstone Studios at 6pm for Maidstone council to decide how it would have ruled on the application.

A public inquiry will be held later this year after the decision was taken out of the council's hands.

Protect Kent chairman Richard Knox-Johnston said his group was against the development and urged like-minded residents to make their voices heard.

He said: "We will certainly be at the planning inquiry starting in autumn, making a strong point that the proper planning procedure has not been followed in the case of KIG."

The KIG proposal would see a freight interchange built on acres of countryside at the foot of the North Downs.

Police search for road rage attacker

OFFICERS are appealing for witnesses after a 22-year-old man was assaulted in a road rage attack on Sunday.

A man in a red car, believed to be a Ford Mondeo, attacked the victim while he sat in his car at traffic lights in Bishops Way, Maidstone, at 3.50pm.

The offender is aged between 33 and 37, with short shaven hair and blue eyes.

Anyone with information is asked to contact DS Tristan Stevens at Mid Kent Police on 01795 419338 or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Crackdown on mini-moto nuisance on town's roads

POLICE are cracking down on youngsters who have been causing problems on the county town's roads.

Officers seized a mini moto in Walderslade after a young man was found driving on the road with no insurance or licence.

On the same day neighbourhood police officers spoke to the parents of a boy driving a motorcycle anti-socially in Boxley.

If you see anything suspicious call PCSO Jamie Martin, the neighbourhood officer for Boxley, on 01622 604392.

Positive campaign to fight ageism in the workplace

EMPLOYERS are being encouraged to increase the value of their businesses by recruiting older workers.

An Age Positive stand will be on show tomorrow at the Business Advice Open Day at the Ramada Hotel, in Hollingbourne, to give employers to the opportunity to learn more about hiring older employees.

Steve Billam, from the Department for Work and Pensions' Age Positive team, said: "Our Age Positive stand will give employers access to practical guidance to successfully tap into this pool of talent."

Play equipment funding boost for autistic pupils

SCHOOL children with autism will be able to develop essential skills while they enjoy testing out their new play equipment.

The Quest School, in West Malling, has added to its range of educational equipment thanks to a donation of almost £500 from Britannia Building Society's Community Fund.

The school, which caters for children with autism, will also use the donation to develop its numeracy skills programme for the youngsters.

McDonalds serves new football kit to teen team

A YOUTH football team will be dressed in stylish new kits next time they walk on to pitch – thanks to a generous donation from their nearest McDonalds.

Burham FC Under 14s has been given a new kit and new coaching equipment by The Mall Chequers branch of the fast-food outlet in Maidstone.

The village team will be able to use the new equipment to help them improve their skills on the pitch thanks to McDonald's community football programme.



For information and advice on travelling in Kent and for all our traffic regulation orders, please see the Kent on Saturday or the Kent on Sunday or visit our website at www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Dogs put on trial at national Police finals

■ BY ANNA WHITE

THE finals of the National Police Dog Trials were held at Leeds Castle – but the Kent force did not compete after its champion dog was struck down with a medical condition.

This was the first time the event has been held in Kent in its prestigious 49-year history, so it was a big blow for Kent Police not to have its dogs taking part.

Twenty-eight finalists from across the UK competed at the historic castle in Hollingbourne from Thursday to Sunday after coming through regional heats.

But Kent's champion dog Rex, an Alsatian who specialises in tracking, searching, chasing and detaining offenders, had to be retired from the force after developing a spinal problem shortly after the force's trials.

Prestigious

Insp Preston Chalk, head of Kent Police's dog section based at Coldharbour, in Aylesford, said: "We were proud to be hosting such a prestigious national event here in the county."

"While officers from Kent police were not competing in the finals this year, the force's impressive track record is one of the reasons it was chosen to host the dog trials.

"We have won six national police dog titles in the past four years.

"But this year, our force champion had to be



CONTROL: Police dogs' obedience was tested to its limits at the National Police Dog finals held at Leeds Castle

medically retired a week after the force trials due to a spinal condition, which meant it could not continue to work.

"This significantly affected our chances of qualifying for the nationals. It is disappointing but the welfare of our dogs is a priority."

The first two stages of the competition, which included searching and tracking, were held at an Ashford venue away from the public.

The final stages at Leeds Castle, which was free to watch for members of the public and attracted hundreds of spectators, involved work-related tests in obedience, agility, straight chase, stand-off, weapon and gun

attack, emergency recall and crowd control.

The entrants were judged by a panel of police experts, including Sgt Jim Gall, of South Wales Police, Sgt Ian Craven, of the Metropolitan Police and PC Tony Ryan, of Lincolnshire Police.

Nottingham PC Dave Buckley and his dog Chaz were named winners of the national trials with a total score of 911 points.

The winning pair was presented with their award by Prince Michael of Kent after a formal parade of all the finalists on Sunday.

• **Kent Police has filmed the National Dog Trials and we also sent a video team to cover the event. See the clips at www.yourkenttv.co.uk. Search 'dogs'.**

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St George's Day celebrations

FAMILIES were treated to a weekend of medieval celebrations in the county town to mark St George's Day.

The events kicked off on Thursday with a colourful parade through the town centre.

Children from Maidstone schools, a brass band and Indian dhol drummers marched from Week Street, through Fremlin Walk, to Brenchley Gardens, where the St George flag was raised in a special ceremony.

The celebrations carried on into the weekend with a medieval faire on Saturday and Sunday, in Brenchley Gardens, offering clothing,

jewellery, toys, tarot readings and a clown.

Maidstone Museum, in St Faiths Street, also held a scriptwriting lesson on Saturday, and visitors were treated to Celtic style, folk rock music which was playing in the bandstand.

On Sunday a mechanical fire breathing dragon and a robotic horse entertained the crowds and a traditional Scouts parade by its way through the town centre.

The events were organised by Maidstone council, North West Kent Racial Equality council and Town Centre Management, and supported by Kent County Council.

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CAMPAIGN: Arthur Mercer (inset) fought to get the Chart Sutton pavilion rebuilt in the years leading up to his death

Villagers make vow to rebuild pavilion in honour of Arthur

A COMMUNITY has vowed to honour a dying man's wish to build a new sports pavilion – but they need to raise another £30,000 to make it come true.

Arthur Mercer was among the crowd with his father on Coronation Day in 1953 when Chart Sutton's existing sports pavilion was officially opened.

Since that day it has severely deteriorated and Arthur, who died in March, spent his final years continuously fund-raising for a new pavilion to be built in the village.

The community has now come together to continue his dedicated work and help achieve his final wish.

The small pavilion at the playing field in Warmlake Road is still used by local football clubs.

From the outside it looks shabby and tired, but on the inside there are leaks, gaping holes and a thick layer of mould.

The villagers have tried to redecorate to bring the pavilion back to life, but the mould continues to defeat their efforts.

Plans for a replacement have been drawn up and submitted to Maidstone council's planning committee.

They include space for activities, clubs, parties and meetings for all generations, but

■ BY ANNA WHITE

the cost of the new pavilion will be £60,000.

The village has raised about £20,000 to add to Arthur's £10,000, by hosting a series of summer fêtes, quizzes, Saturday markets and egg hunts for children.

Former Mayor of Maidstone and Independent Cllr Mike FitzGerald, who lives in Chart Sutton, said: "Some of the things growing on the ceiling [in the existing pavilion] look like they're from a different planet.

"The pavilion would be far more than just a sports facility. We want it to be a community space for young people, old people, children, families, everyone.

"And we've decided that, if we can get it built, we're going to call it the Arthur Mercer Pavilion. Arthur was such a lovely man. He loved Chart Sutton and he wanted the community to benefit from a new pavilion".

To raise awareness of their mission the community approached a local video production company to produce a short film about the campaign and about Arthur, which can now be seen on Yourkenttv.

Kersh Media, run by former BBC producer Graham Majin, donated its services free of charge to film the run-down site.

Mr Majin said: "We were pleased to get involved. Like many small rural communities in Kent, Chart Sutton is fighting hard to keep its sense of community alive.

"The village post office and shop closed in 2007, and a new pavilion could become a new focus for village life".

• To make a donation to the new pavilion fund please contact Cllr FitzGerald on 01622 743270.

VIEW THIS CLIP ON

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 Your LOCAL TV ONLINE



Mike FitzGerald on the fight to build new pavilion. Search 'pavilion'



OPENING DAY: The pavilion is opened on the Queen's Coronation day in 1953

yourmaidstone NEWS IN BRIEF

Reopening breathes new life into museum

A REVAMPED family attraction has smashed its targets for April within the first days of its grand opening.

The Museum of Kent Life officially reopened as Kent Life on Saturday, April 4, after undergoing a £50,000 transformation.

Bosses say the new play areas and activities such as the piglet and ferret racing went down extremely well with its first visitors and that the site was "heaving with happy customers".

The park's figures show the attraction welcomed more than 1,000 people per day, with 7,000 people visiting during the four-day Easter weekend.

The total number of families visiting the newly improved site, in Sandling, was about 15,000 during the school holidays.

The impressive visitor records have more than trebled the total for the whole of April last year.

Warning to bogus callers

A COLD-callers control zone will be used in another Maidstone district to protect families from rogue traders and distraction burglars.

Maidstone and District Neighbourhood Watch Association will run the scheme in Broadoak Estate Avenue, Loose, after its success in other parts of Maidstone.

Signs will be put up in the area to warn off bogus callers and leaflets providing advice handed out to both householders and traders.

Lorraine Hemphrey, Neighbourhood Watch liaison officer, said: "It is now established that burglars and rogue traders are often linked."

Impress at park concert

UP-AND-coming bands will have the chance to wow crowds with their musical talent this summer at Jam in the Park.

The live show for youth bands, which is being organised by Maidstone Town Centre Management and New Line Learning Academies, will be held in Brenchley Gardens in Maidstone.

Bands will need to audition at the Zebra Bar in King Street on June 7, from midday to 6pm, for a chance to play live at Jam in the Park on Saturday, August 8.

To book an audition slot call 07894 423075 or email jaminthepark@hotmail.co.uk.

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	£200 Freezeout	8pm
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Mon 4th May	Conclusion of the Kent Cup Final (if necessary)	2pm
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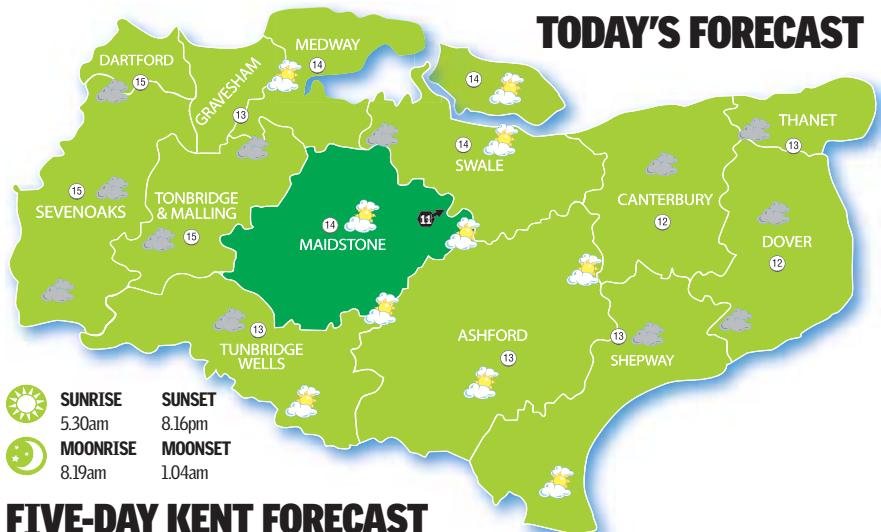
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	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	14°C	16°C	16°C	18°C	18°C	Gravesend	14°C	16°C	16°C	18°C	19°C
Canterbury	12°C	14°C	15°C	16°C	17°C	Maidstone	14°C	15°C	16°C	18°C	18°C
Chatham	12°C	15°C	14°C	15°C	15°C	Ramsgate	12°C	14°C	15°C	16°C	17°C
Dartford	14°C	16°C	16°C	18°C	19°C	Rochester	12°C	15°C	14°C	15°C	15°C
Dover	11°C	13°C	14°C	15°C	15°C	Sevenoaks	13°C	15°C	14°C	16°C	17°C
Faversham	12°C	15°C	14°C	15°C	15°C	Sittingbourne	12°C	15°C	14°C	15°C	15°C
Folkestone	11°C	13°C	14°C	15°C	15°C	Tonbridge	14°C	16°C	16°C	18°C	18°C
Gillingham	12°C	15°C	14°C	15°C	15°C	Tun Wells	14°C	16°C	16°C	18°C	18°C

WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	7:00am	5.4m
	Sunday	8:18am	5.3m
Dover	Saturday	6:06pm	5.7m
	Sunday	7:03am	5.5m
Dungeness	Saturday	5:44pm	6.2m
	Sunday	6:21am	6.0m
Ramsgate	Saturday	6:04am	4.3m
	Sunday	7:33am	4.2m
Sheerness	Saturday	6:49am	5.2m
	Sunday	8:06am	5.1m
Whitstable	Saturday	6:57am	4.7m
	Sunday	8:17am	4.6m

AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	13°C	Madrid	17°C
Athens	17°C	New York	29°C
Barcelona	16°C	Paris	15°C
Beijing	24°C	Rome	23°C
Bombay	32°C	Sydney	17°C
Cape Town	20°C	Tenerife	20°C
Cardiff	10°C	Tokyo	19°C
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Hop on over to the Kent County Fair

FAMILIES will be able to enjoy a wide range of countryside-themed activities and events at The Hop Farm's annual Kent County Fair this bank holiday weekend.

This year the all-day arena at the Paddock Wood site will include pony club games, show jumping, Shire horse displays, and new dog agility and companion dog shows.



FEATHERED FRIENDS:
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A group of Morris dancers will perform a traditional Kent dance and the Women's Institute dance group will be running regular demonstrations.

Those wanting to enjoy a bit of thrill-seeking can enjoy the fair's Action Zone, which includes tank and quad bike rides. Or if people are after something a bit less nail-biting there will be numerous shopping opportunities, such as craft demonstrations and Kent delicacies in the Food and Drink Pavilion.

The family park will also be revealing two new attractions this spring, the 3D Great Goblin Hunt and a restored vintage Victorian carousel, to add to its many other activities.

The Hop Farm has plenty of camping and caravanning facilities too if you fancy making a weekend break of it.

The event will run Saturday to Monday. Tickets can be booked at www.thehopfarm.co.uk and cost £11 and £36 for a family ticket.

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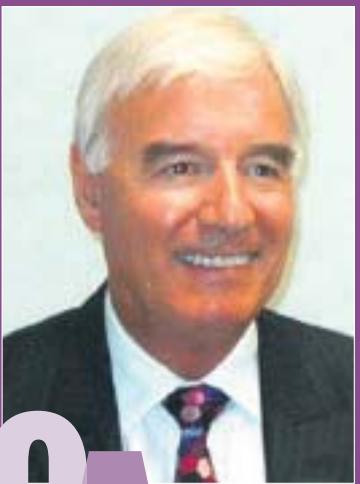
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QUESTION & ANSWER

PETER JONES



Q & A

The breast surgeon who works at the private Somerfield Hospital and Maidstone NHS Hospital talks to **Anna White** about his working partnership with his wife, and how he remains positive to help patients

Q Can you tell us a little about yourself?

A I was born in Wales but my father worked in a bank so we moved quite a lot. I started school in Ipswich, then moved to Surrey and went to a grammar in Purley. I gained a place at Westminster Medical School and graduated in 1972. Postgraduate training was at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge; St James's, Balham; St Richard's, Chichester; St George's, London, and finally back to Westminster, where I was a senior registrar. I was appointed consultant general surgeon at Maidstone in 1983.

Q Why did you want to become a breast surgeon?

A At the time there were no specialist breast surgeons. In those days we did a very long training, both in the hours worked and the years it took to become a consultant. We covered all aspects of general surgery, including breast problems. Over the years sub-specialisation increased and when, after 30 years, I came off the on-call rota, there was only time to deal with the ever-increasing workload at the Breast Clinic, although I still undertake general surgery in the private sector.

Q Working on a daily basis with breast cancer patients must be an emotional job, how do you stay positive?

A My wife and I see just over 300 newly-diagnosed breast cancer patients each year and

it can be emotionally draining. However, we are able to support each other and have a fantastic team of specialists who share the strain. Our team and the superb environment in which we work keep our feet on the ground and help maintain a positive outlook. And with better outcomes for breast cancer patients, this is becoming easier.

Q Tell us about your working partnership with your wife.

A Sue came to help me set up the Breast Clinic in 1993 and since then we have worked closely together. Sue's years in general practice have contributed to her amazing communication skills and over the years she has developed the skills required to offer all types of breast reconstruction, both immediate and delayed, nipple reconstruction, breast augmentation and reduction. We enjoy working with each other and it is always great to have an instant second opinion available.

Q What services and support do you offer patients?

A We offer a comprehensive breast service. All our patients, both NHS and private, are seen in a one-stop clinic which includes taking a history, examination and all initial investigations, which usually include mammography and ultrasound. Together with colleagues I established a charity in 1995, the Mid Kent Breast Cancer Appeal, to support the work of

the Breast Clinic and thanks to a hard-working team of fundraisers, this has helped provide modern equipment most breast clinics do not have immediate access to. We provide support to the patients ourselves, but the specialist breast care nurses play a major role.

Q Tell us more about the Breast Clinic at Maidstone Hospital?

A Five years ago a dream came true and Maidstone's Breast Clinic opened, which subsequently was named after the late Peggy Wood in recognition of her contribution to fundraising. The clinic is modern, tastefully decorated and provides a great environment for the clinic and the screening service, and is exclusive for the use of breast patients.

Q What do you think the benefits are of working both in private and public sectors of healthcare?

A The main benefits are that we are able to work with the same team of specialists. Our clinics are supported by a specialist breast care nurse and we have a combined breast clinic with the oncologist at least once a week at Somerfield Hospital. One of the most important aspects of patient care over recent years has been that all cancer patients, or patients suspected of having cancer, are discussed in a multidisciplinary team meeting. We believe this helps provide the best treatment options for patients and these are discussed with them on an individual basis after these meetings.

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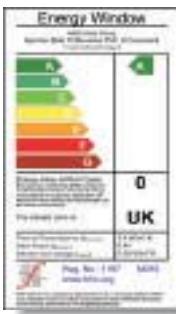
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Apprentice star Mona Lewis at the Kent 2020 Vision conference. Search 'vision'

EDITOR'S CHOICE

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Foreign truckers blamed for UK's porous borders

■ BY KEVIN O'SULLIVAN

THE true scale of Britain's lax border security has been revealed after shocking new figures showed that nine out of ten truckers bringing illegal immigrants into the country are foreign.

The UK Borders Agency admitted that of all the lorry drivers bringing in desperate migrants into the UK, 90 per cent were overseas drivers.

The figures, revealed following a Freedom of Information request, showed 1,571 foreign truckers were fined an estimated £2 million last year after clandestine migrants were found hiding in the back of their trucks.

In comparison, only 195 British hauliers were caught with stowaways and were fined some £300,000.

British drivers have accused their foreign counterparts of risking £2,000 fines per migrant found because they know they will not have to pay them.

The statistics only show what was collected by the agency, not the total amount of fines issued, meaning there is still more than £1million owed in fines by foreign truckers.

Shadow immigration minister Damian Green said the foreign truckers were "abusing" UK laws and that a crackdown was needed.

The Tory MP for Ashford said the £2,000 fines were not deterring foreign drivers, adding: "Clearly many are abusing our immigration laws and they should be punished effectively when they are found to be carrying migrants on board their lorries."

"This is why the Conservatives continue to call for a dedicated and specialist border police force."



PORT IN A STORM: Would-be migrants keeping warm in Calais, hoping to gain access to the UK

Trucker Mervyn Osgood, 54, from Maidstone, said: "It's an absolute farce – we always see the foreign drivers talking to the migrants in Calais.

"These figures don't surprise me at all."

He said foreign truckers caught with illegals on board simply ignored the fines handed to them – sometimes not even telling their bosses they had been caught.

He added: "They know they can get away with it because they don't seem to get prosecuted, so to them it's worth the risk."

"They get £1,500 from each illegal, so if they get four on they pocket around £6,000."

"Then they just unload their cargoes and head back to their countries."

"We can't do that because we live here and we take our jobs seriously."

The true extent of illegal migration is likely to be much bigger than the figures reveal.

The UK Border Agency admitted the stats do not reflect the fact that the 1,571 foreign

lorry drivers may have brought in up to ten migrants or more at a time.

A spokesman for the agency said: "These figures don't reflect the actual figure because there are often more than one clandestine found per vehicle."

The spokesman said that last year a total of 28,000 migrants was caught trying to sneak into Britain on board lorries crossing the Channel by ferry.

The stats also revealed the foreign truckers were fined a further £811,507 for working in Britain without the necessary haulage permits.

Peter Cullum, head of international affairs at the Road Hauliers Association of Great Britain, said British drivers were doing their best to avoid migrant hot-spots across the Channel.

He said: "We know most of the drivers coming across with migrants on board are foreign. "It's very few of our guys."

Desperate migrant clung to Eurostar train at 186mph

AN ILLEGAL immigrant clung to the roof of a Eurostar as it hit a top speed of 186mph travelling through Kent, it has emerged.

The desperate migrant is thought to have jumped on to the train from an overhead bridge as it slowed before entering the Channel Tunnel near Calais.

He then clung to the roof for the 45-minute journey through the tunnel before the train reached Kent and hurtled towards London – with the man somehow holding on.

The migrant was only spotted at Ebbsfleet International Station, near Dartford, as he tried to slip down in between two carriages to make an escape.

The bid has highlighted how desperate the estimated 1,300 immigrants living around Calais have become to get into the UK.

Jumped

Michael Whelan, 38, a passenger on the Brussels to London service on Thursday, told a national newspaper: "I spoke to the train captain at Ebbsfleet and he told me the train slowed as it approached the tunnel at Calais so he thought the man probably jumped on to the roof there from an overhead bridge.

"I don't know how long he was on the roof, but one of the Eurostar workers spotted him on it at Ebbsfleet and then he hid in the gap between the carriages."

The man, thought to be of Indian descent and in his early 20s, was arrested by officers from the British Transport Police before being handed over to the UK Border Agency, which gave him a medical examination.

Passengers were delayed as sniffer dogs were brought in to search for further immigrants, but the man had carried out his death-defying stunt alone.

A Eurostar spokesman said: "A man believed to be an illegal immigrant was on one of the train carriages. He was removed and detained by British Transport Police. We can't comment on how he got there, but the train would have reached speeds up to 186mph between the tunnel and Ebbsfleet."

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But we need YOUR help to let us know which schools should get the cash and to help spread the word of all the benefits to health, the local economy and your pocket that buying local brings. The www.foodforkent.co.uk website is spearheading our campaign by offering a huge range of seasonal produce – all sourced, wherever possible, from Kent – and is the perfect one-stop shop for all your shopping needs. Now every time you place an order of more than £40 on the site, we'll donate £2.50 to your nominated school. All you have to do is let us know which school you want to support and give the money to, and then tell your friends and other parents. Every time



Flavour of the month? You're absolutely right

IT'S in season for just a few short weeks, but while it's here it's one of the taste sensations of the year. Kent asparagus is available now and as a special promotion anyone placing an order at www.foodforkent.co.uk will receive a FREE bunch so they can taste it for themselves. The special offer applies to every single order placed between now and next Sunday, May 3.

Simply log on and place your order at the site and before you know it, your shopping will arrive – complete with the free gift.

Asparagus is the perfect example of a food benefiting from a reduction in food miles and is at its very best within hours of being picked. Meanwhile, next Saturday, May 2, the Penshurst farmers' market will be celebrating its arrival with an Asparagus Festival. It will showcase locally-grown asparagus, while local farmer Michael Bourne will be on hand to showcase the best way to cook and grow asparagus.

Alison Shamash, the Asparagus Festival organiser, said: "English asparagus is always popular with visitors to the market. It has only a short six-week season, and it needs to be as fresh as possible, so local is definitely best.

"Asparagus contains high levels of vitamin A, folic acid and dietary fibre, which all play an important role in fighting cancer."

"It is also rich in soluble fibre, which has a protective effect against degenerative heart diseases. There are fewer than four calories per spear, and it is very low in cholesterol and has no fat. And because it's so local, it's very low in food miles, too."



they then spend on the site, another £2.50 will go to the school – and you'll be surprised at how quickly it all adds up. The scheme has already been tested at a handful of schools across the county and is proving a big hit, with parents eager to take part and schools seeing the very real financial benefits. Jonathan Parker of www.foodforkent.co.uk, said: "Healthy, fresh produce should be an integral part of every child's diet."

"Food for Schools is an exciting new scheme where we can raise awareness of the benefits of local produce and donate significant funds to our county's schools."

"We've run a successful pilot and now we are rolling it out to the whole of Kent. If you care about children's diets, local produce and your local school, get in touch to see how you can help. Together we're going to raise a lot of cash for Kent's schools."

You may be a parent, teacher, governor or member of the PTA, but to ensure your school benefits, simply contact Jonathan Parker direct by emailing your details to schools@foodforkent.co.uk. You will then be given a special code and every time you shop with www.foodforkent.co.uk £2.50 will go towards the school – with the money handed over every month.

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■ BY ANNA WHITE

MAIDSTONE students are in demand after making a big impression wining and dining jockeys and their guests at the Cheltenham Festival.

The hospitality and catering students from MidKent College's Oakwood Park campus took on the challenge of becoming part of the 3,000 staff on duty at this year's horse-racing festival.

The team helped serve 18,000 bottles of champagne, 8,000 gallons of tea and coffee, 125,000 pints of Guinness and three tonnes of smoked salmon throughout the four-day event. The students started at 7am and worked in kitchens and hospitality boxes until 7pm to ensure everyone at the festival – which is the highlight of the National Hunt season – was catered for.

However, their hard work did not go unnoticed and college hospitality and catering programme leader Duncan Weetman was awarded a prize for having "the best students at Cheltenham" by festival floor manager Morag Wallis. Since the event the hard working team has been requested to work at other



WINNERS: Carrie Caldecourt and Rhys Ware of MidKent College, with horse Missie

functions, such as Henley Regatta, Silverstone, Goodwood and Aintree.

Mr Weetman said: "This event has provided students with invaluable experience of working in a high-pressure, high-quality environment.

"It was well worth all their hard work to have made such a positive impression on the organisers. They have done incredibly well."

NVQ level two professional cookery student Rhys Ware, 17, from East Malling, said: "I

was really proud to have been involved and it was a great experience for me.

"It was totally different cooking for such a large number of people and I enjoyed every moment of it."

NVQ level two hospitality student Carrie Caldecourt, 17, from West Malling, said: "We arrived on the Monday, started work on the Tuesday, and worked through until the Friday before coming home. It was hard work from start to finish, but great fun."

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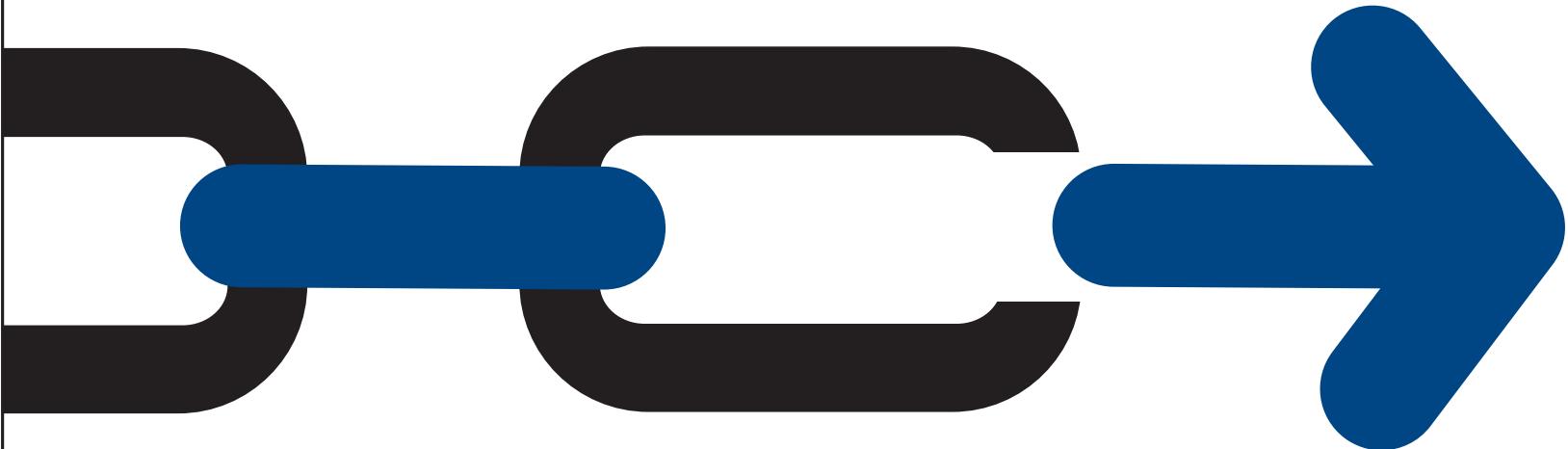
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Trekkie stereotypes help make the world go round

STEREOTYPES are a wonderful thing. They allow us to pigeonhole people in a quite remarkable way.

Whole nations can be referred to in a way which either acknowledges their strengths or, more often than not, underlines our own latent xenophobia.

Religious followers can find themselves all lumped together in a gloriously unfair description. And, however good you are in business, your position or occupation will mean most of us have some preconceived notions about you before you have uttered a word.

All opinions we form by stereotype rather than experience. And we all fall victim to the sweeping generalisations – some more than others – and always to varying degrees.

The vast majority are unfair. After all, most of them are just plain mean. But not all. Oh no. Some stereotypes are just plain fact. And when you see the persons to which they refer

you will go away thinking 'cripes, they really WERE just like people warned me'.

The perfect example of this is the Trekkie. The die-hard Star Trek fan, who will immediately tell you they are actually a 'Trekker'. And with a new movie hitting the big screens this month they were out in force in London last week to cheer on their heroes at the premiere.

Now the stereotype would be of geeky-looking people – a cunning blend of still-living-with-your-parents-haircuts, acne, home-made props, stick-on Spock ears and life-long difficulty relating to the opposite sex.

And, sure enough, the gaggle of Spock-ear wearing, bad hair, awkward looking folk stood outside whatever cinema it was at Leicester Square proved there was a reason stereotypes are something not worth entirely dismissing.

Star Trek is a bizarre obsession for many but has all the key ingredients to generate the form of super fandom which takes people down the dubious path of obsession; its science fiction (which always attracts the fanatic),

there have been outings on the big and small screen, spin-offs a-plenty, and enough merchandise to fill a small country.

But surely it has become such a joke to be a Trekkie that you'd think the real hardcore would realise people were laughing at – and crucially not with – them. You'd think they would make an effort to prove being a Star Trek fan didn't mean having a life-long aversion to basic levels of hygiene and even a nodding acquaintance with fashion. You'd think they'd want to smash the stereotype.

The only conclusion I can draw from this is that they actually enjoy the sense of belonging fulfilling the Trekkie stereotype brings with it.

And, after all, where would be the fun if they shattered that particular stereotype?

Beam me up, Scotty.

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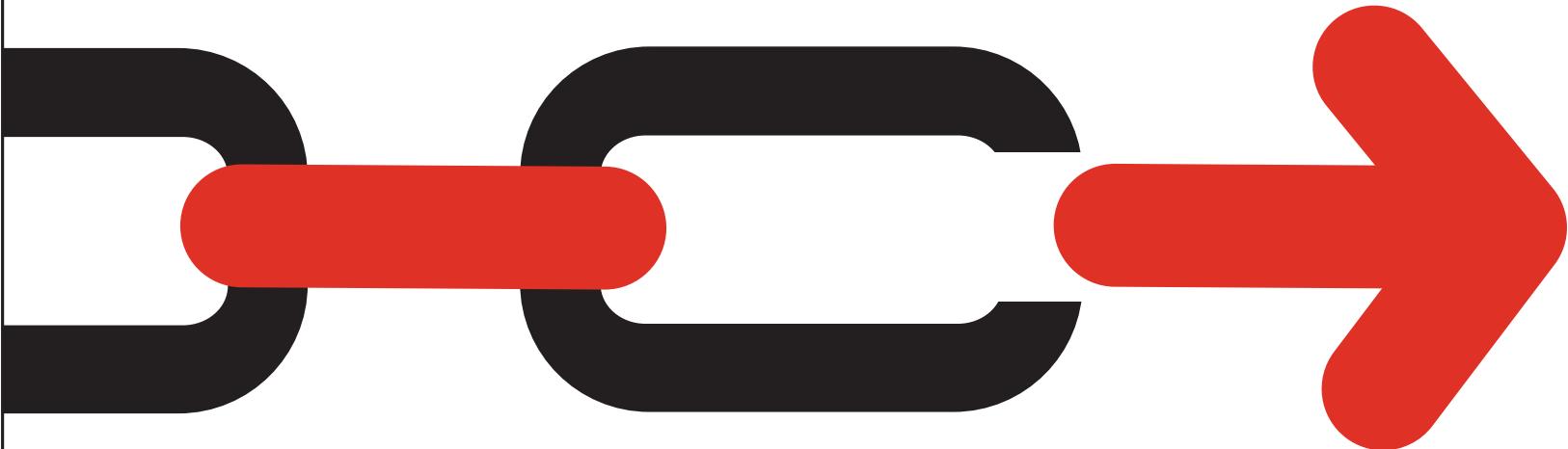


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Folkestone's alternative festival is Hevy



HEADLINE: Feeder will perform at the old Rotunda

FEEDER, Ash and Gary Numan will be among the headline acts descending on Folkestone seafront this summer for the launch of a new music festival.

The old Rotunda amusement park at the foot of the cliffs will be the site of the Hevy Music Festival on Saturday, August 1, which will also feature a string of other indie-rock bands including Hundred Reasons, Kids In Glass Houses, Attack! Attack!, Sonic Boom Six

■ BY JAMES ALEXANDRE

and In Case Of Fire.

The newest arrival to Kent's growing festival scene comes in the wake of the postponement last month of Red List Live at Port Lympne, due to increasing competition and the effects of the recession.

Promoter James Dutton said: "There are many fantastic new festivals being developed in Kent this year.

"To try to create something a bit different,

and cater for a market that we felt could do with some attention, we're developing this as an alternative music festival.

"We're unbelievably excited to be bringing these huge names to Folkestone, but our aim has always been to develop the local music scene and support the wealth of talent Kent has to offer.

He said preparations had been ongoing for the past six months and they were "keeping things simple" for their first year by sticking to a one-day event.

"We're hoping to develop the event next year, with more bands on more stages, possibly over a number of days," said Mr Dutton.

"We're now on the hunt for Kent's greatest bands to play the festival's second stage and they can get in touch via our website."

The company behind the festival, Hevy, has been involved in Folkestone before in bringing the likes of the Holloways and Turin Brakes to the Leas Cliff Hall.

The announcement comes as the music and arts scene in Shepway continues to thrive, with the opening of Folkestone's latest live venue Quarterhouse already attracting top jazz players and stand-up acts.

Tickets for the Hevy Festival are priced at £48 and are on sale now at www.hevy.co.uk and from the Leas Cliff Hall box office.

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■ HEROES: 3dbs Down rocked The Beacon Court Tavern in Gillingham for charity



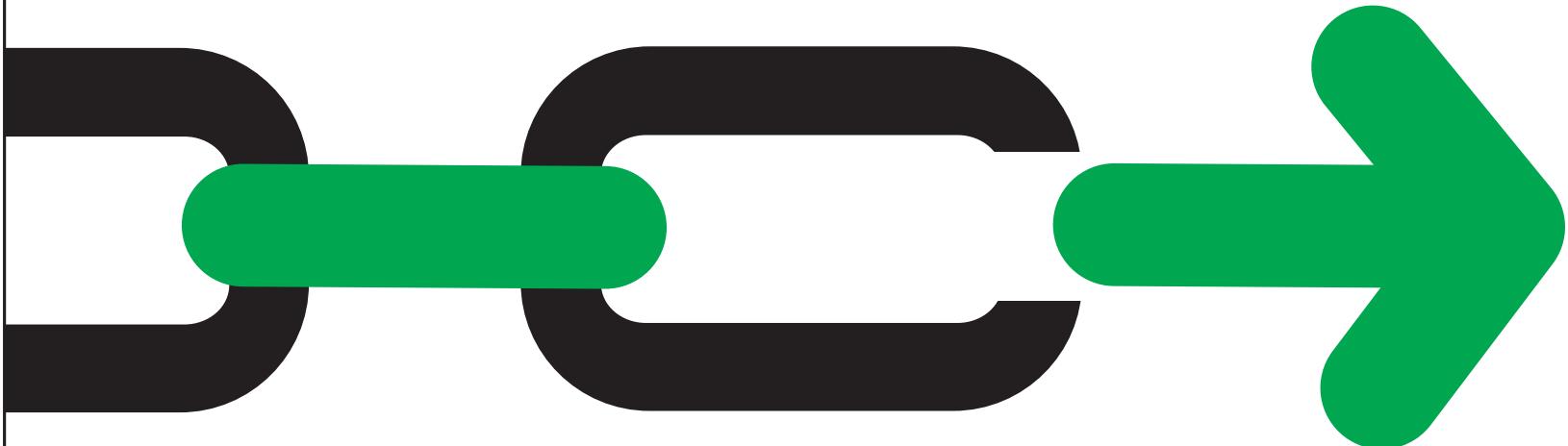
■ QUARTERHOUSE: Canterbury-based musician Richard J Lewis performs



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- 4 Backburner - 27/6 The Frenchman Folkestone
- 5 Euston - 10/7 The Hope Inn St Margarets

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Once back at home, you can keep feeling invigorated with new Lenor Infusions with 'Touch Effects' that gradually release little bursts of freshness from your clothes every time you touch, transforming ordinary events into special moments.

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To enter, simply answer this question:
Q What's the name of the New Lenor Infusions product?

Send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Lenor Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6SR.

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For our full Terms and Conditions please visit www.kentnews.co.uk or for a posted copy of the T&C's call 01303 817073.



If you do not wish to receive any literature please write 'no literature' on your entry.

To find out more about how the 'Touch Effects' can help make everyday moments even more special, visit www.lenortoucheffects.co.uk.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. This free prize draw is open to all residents in the UK over 18 years of age, excluding employees of Procter & Gamble UK and their agents, and anyone professionally associated with this promotion.
2. Entries are posted/mailed at entrant's own risk. Proof of posting/ mailing is not proof of delivery/receipt. Last date for receipt of entries is Friday, May 22, 2009.
3. All correct entries received by May 22 will be entered into a free prize draw, one winner will be randomly selected by an independent person to win a one night stay for two people in a double or twin room with full facility use at the Marriott Hotel & Country Club including two treatments per person. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household.

4. All confirmed bookings are subject to The Marriott Hotel and Country Club's terms and conditions. The prize is subject to availability.

5. Travel is not permitted over Christmas, New Year, Easter and Bank Holidays.

6. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute the prize of equal or greater value in the event of unavailability due to circumstances outside their control due to circumstances beyond their control.

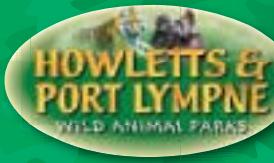
7. By entering the prize draw, entrants agree to be bound by the rules and by any other requirements set out in the promotional material.

8. PROMOTER: Procter & Gamble UK, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 0XP.

9. A list of winners can be obtained from Kosmedia Publishing.

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yourletters

TALK TIME

JAMIE MARTIN

The police community support officer for Boxley took the time to speak to Yourmaidstone about her role and how speeding is a major issue in the area



Which area in Maidstone do you cover?

The Boxley Parish area, which includes Grove Green, Sandling, Lordswood and Walderslade.

Tell us what your role includes?

My main role is to provide a high-visibility policing presence, to give crime prevention advice to the elderly or the young if they have been a victim of crime, and also to engage with and provide reassurance to the community.

What are the main issues raised by residents?

Speeding. There are lots of different speed limits in the parish so trying to enforce these presents a challenge and was raised by residents at a recent meeting. And litter and anti-social behaviour are issues around Tesco and shops in Grove Green, where youngsters congregate.

How do you plan to address these?

Local PC Lee Cumberland has been conducting speed checks. We are trying to encourage Speedwatch, a scheme which gets the community involved by asking volunteers note the speed of vehicles and educate drivers. We have also been organising a community litter-pick with the help of Maidstone council and the Cubs. Anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated and we have been giving out notices to those who create a nuisance, mostly for noisy motorcycles. We can also seize motorbikes from persistent offenders.

How can residents get in touch with you?

Telephone me on 01622 604392.

YOUR LETTERS

Green Party want town's speed limit reduced to 20mph

BY ANNA WHITE

CAMPAGNERS have launched a bid to make the county town's residential roads safer by reducing the speed limit to 20mph. Maidstone Green Party has chosen Sandling as the Day of Green Action, which falls on Saturday, 17 August, during the Maidstone campaign. Jamie Jeffery, the Green Party's parliamentary candidate, said: "The vast majority of people in Sandling are parking their homes to go slower than 20mph and parking for 20mph speed limits is operating successfully." Hard evidence shows that cars travelling at 20mph are safer than those going at 30mph, yet most roads in the centre of Maidstone allow cars to travel at 30mph. The campaign in the continued...

...only over the past 20 years have parents noticed the need for not letting their walk is road safety. With fatal road accidents in Maidstone increasing from 17 in 1997, the need for a 20mph Maidstone has been highlighted.

The campaign has received support from the Department of Transport, which has asked the county council to consults to implement the reduced speed limit. The campaign hopes to follow in the footsteps of Southampton, Portsmouth and Oxford, where the limit will be held at County Hall. Mr Jeffery added: "We'll be continuing...

Don't slow us down in town any more

After reading about the Green Party's plan to impose 20mph speed limits on Maidstone's roads in last week's paper I felt I had to write in.

The roads around the town centre are already hopelessly clogged up and I can't see how lowering the speed limit will help this.

Using the one-way system is already painful enough and the rare times when traffic can move above 20mph should not be stopped, it's a blessed relief!

Another effect of lowering the speed limit would be to cause more pollution, as cars sit in town centre jams, at a time when we are all worrying about the effects of global warming.

Surely this is what the Green Party are trying to avoid?

The only thing they have got right is that more children should be walking to school



LETTERS: Please send your letters to us at Yourmaidstone, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR



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rather than being driven by their mums in huge four wheel drive vehicles – "for safety" of course.

This is largely down to parents being too lazy, but if reducing the speed limit to 20mph on roads around schools is seen as making

them safer and encourages people to walk the school run, then so be it.

But please don't do it on every road around Maidstone as that will drive us all crazy.

Ben Matthews, from Maidstone, by email

Compensation campaign stacks up against French



I agree, stop our traffic misery

Kent County Council are quite right with their campaign to try and get compensation from the French over the ferry blockade.

Every time there is a problem across the Channel we in Kent have to suffer.

It is really infuriating.

Residents of this county have no control over fish quotas, shipping regulations or whatever else it is they are going on about.

There is nothing we can do to help or hinder them, yet we are forced to endure hours of traffic misery because of a dispute which has absolutely nothing to do with us.

So I agree – Enough is Enough.

Michael Hardy, from West Malling by email

We'd never get away with same

If a group of British workers carried on in the same way as the French fishermen you can bet there would be uproar in Europe.

Other affected countries – especially if they happened to be France – would queue up to condemn British arrogance and high-handedness.

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But no one seems to have anything to say in the EU Parliament to the French.

I thought free movement of goods and people between member states was one of the cornerstones of the EU.

Well the French are quite clearly breaking that edict and they should be punished for doing so.

Vanessa Brown, by email



No freedom of speech would be sickening

It is important to remember that, despite how people may spin comments, everyone is entitled to their own opinion.

Just because they are an elected representative of a political party, does not mean that they are speaking on behalf of their party.

It annoys me that so many comments made by individuals are now attached to their party as well to make a cheap political point.

Whatever happened to freedom of speech and individual opinion?

Alan Collins, from Twydall, comment posted on web story at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk

Council refund is no compensation

So it looks as though Kent County Council may get some of the money it so foolishly invested in Icelandic banks back.

But that does in no way exonerate the staff from what was as an appallingly poor piece of judgement.

Even if some of the taxpayers' money is returned that should in no way excuse the fact that this was a serious error of judgement and whoever was at fault needs to be held accountable.

Philip Blair, from Bearsted, by email

Save our villages, build housing estates

The villages of the county are set to face a slow death unless something is done to provide more and better housing.

The Commission for Rural Communities has identified this as a problem and about time too.

The fact that house prices have been falling is not relevant – most young people and first-time buyers can not get anywhere near the asking price for some of the desirable properties in our attractive villages.

Wealthy commuters and even people buying a second home are destroying the village way of life and this must be addressed.

If the price is some housing

estates, unpopular with locals, being constructed then so be it.

Moira Shelley, by email

Is Government short-changing us again?

So, according to the Government the recession is set to be over by Christmas.

Has anyone got any faith in these sorts of predictions anymore?

We are constantly being told recovery is on the way and things are getting back on track but all I hear about is people being laid off from their jobs and stores closing down.

Any talk of a recovery seems hopelessly premature.

Bob Atkins, by email

Get your running shoes on for charity

I am writing because World Cancer Research Fund's (WCRF) annual Beat the Banana! 5k fun run is just two weeks away.

Places are quickly filling up and we don't want people in Maidstone to miss out. Taking place on May 14, we are calling on runners to race a giant banana around Hyde Park to raise essential funds for WCRF.

To find out more visit www.beatthebanana.org/register or call 020 7343 4205 for more information.

Teresa Nightingale, head of fundraising for World Cancer Research Fund, by email

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■ The White Horse

THE White Horse in Lenham Heath Road, Sandway has become a well-regarded place for both Mexican and traditional British food.

Situated in the heart of the countryside but within easy reach of the county town of Maidstone the family run and family friendly establishment serves a fine selection of real ales on pump from the Whitstable Brewery – just a few miles away.

The eaterie prides itself on the locally sourced and high quality food on offer and a wide range of loyal customers have always found them extremely good value for money.

The pub is open for food from Monday to Friday between the hours of 5pm and 11pm from Monday to Friday and from 12 noon to 12 midnight on Saturday.

Sunday opening is from 12 noon until 10.30pm.

A special karaoke evening is being held on May 23 and the pub has a patio and decked area with a large garden and chil-



dren's play area also available for customers to enjoy.

These are particularly popular during the summer months as drinkers and diners can relax outside and enjoy the sunshine in a traditional English setting.

A full children's menu is also offered with mini fajitas among the most popular dishes.

An all-you-can-eat fajita buffet

is held in the pub every Wednesday and the cost is just £10 per head.

Also extremely popular is a chicken and rib night which takes place on Thursdays and costs £11.95 per diner.

The pub has been in business since July 2008 and since then has gained a reputation for excellent food, great wines and beers and friendly knowledge-

able service with diners from across the county.

Manager Peter Larkin said: "It is a very friendly place with welcoming locals, wonderful countryside nearby and a great community spirit."

The White Horse, Lenham Heath Road, Sandway, Maidstone ME17 2HY. Telephone: 01622 859511. www.the-white-horse.com.

CHEF RECOMMENDS

Bloomers at Overcliffe Hotel

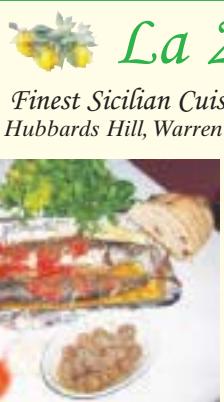
Start with smoked haddock with a creamy parmesan sauce followed by baked lamb layered with a walnut and mushroom stuffing served with a light mint jus. To finish fresh strawberries with liquor and ice cream. Telephone: 01474 322131.

The Village

Don't be afraid to ask for deviations from the menu. When food is cooked fresh requests to amend the dish is not an issue. Grilled rather than fried, no butter, no problem. If dining with children book at the earliest possible time. Telephone: 01622 672200.

Yoons

Start with butterfly king prawns in bread crumbs. There are many dishes we could recommend but our Papan is very popular and for a second course dish we would recommend crispy aromatic duck or Mongolian lamb. Telephone: 01634 409090.



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MONSTERS VS ALIENS (PG)



When Susan Murphy (Reese Witherspoon) grows to 49ft 11in, she is taken to a secret government compound that houses a selection of monsters who are called upon to save the world.

It's a funny road making it in Hollywood for Anna

■ BY ELLIE GENOWER

ANNA Faris may be fast becoming famous as one of the funniest ladies in Hollywood, but the bubbly blonde actress says she wasn't always known for her comic touch.

"I had been in local theatres – all dramatic and never thought of myself as a comedian in any form," she says of her early acting experiences.

"In fact nobody did – nobody thought I was funny at all."

So it's funny now that Anna, who stars alongside Seth Rogen in the new dark comedy *Observe And Report*, is bucking the current trend towards male-heavy 'bromances' or buddy movies.

"There's an audience for female-driven comedy and I'm hoping to produce and create some more stuff," the 32-year-old says.

"It's fun to play with the boys a little bit in *Observe And Report* though."

Observe And Report sees Anna play a department store make-up girl who is the object of security guard Ronnie's infatuation. Ronnie, a delusional and misguided dreamer played by Seth Rogen, spends much of the film trying to catch the mall's elusive pervert.

At the same time, he tries his best to join the police force and woo Brandi, the woman of his dreams, who he doesn't realise is actually a rather mean, selfish character.

"I was really happy, because it's very rare that you come across a character that's so offensive and awful. It's like taking a bite of a juicy apple, but naughty," Anna says.

"It's really fun for me to play a character that makes no apologies for herself. She's definitely the worst character I've ever played. She's selfish, rude, catty, bitchy, dosey and tacky."

But *Observe And Report* isn't just your aver-



BUBBLY: Anna Faris stars in *Observe And Report*

age Hollywood comedy. Its plot takes humour to some pretty dark places and Anna confesses she has a few worries about her parents watching a particularly drunken love scene between Brandi and Ronnie.

"I told them they needed to drink a bunch of wine, at least three bottles, before seeing the movie so maybe they would pass out before they got to the love making scenarios!" she says.

However, the tougher scenes were made easier by her "awesome" co-star Seth Rogen.

Seth returns the compliment, describing Anna's performance in *Observe And Report* as

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"the type of performance I don't think a lot of women would do".

It's all a long way from Anna's roots in Seattle where she grew up with "pretty conservative" parents. She cut her acting chops on small productions before landing a part in the first *Scary Movie*. Subsequent memorable roles in the likes of *Friends* and *Lost In Translation* led to the lead role in *House Bunny*, which she also produced.

But despite the call of stardom, she has managed to keep much of her personal life out of the tabloids, largely staying off the paparazzi radar.

"I lead such a boring life," she says.

"Nobody pays attention. If somebody does take my picture, I'm eating a burrito in my sweats and my mouth is open. I'm kind of a disgusting, boring person."

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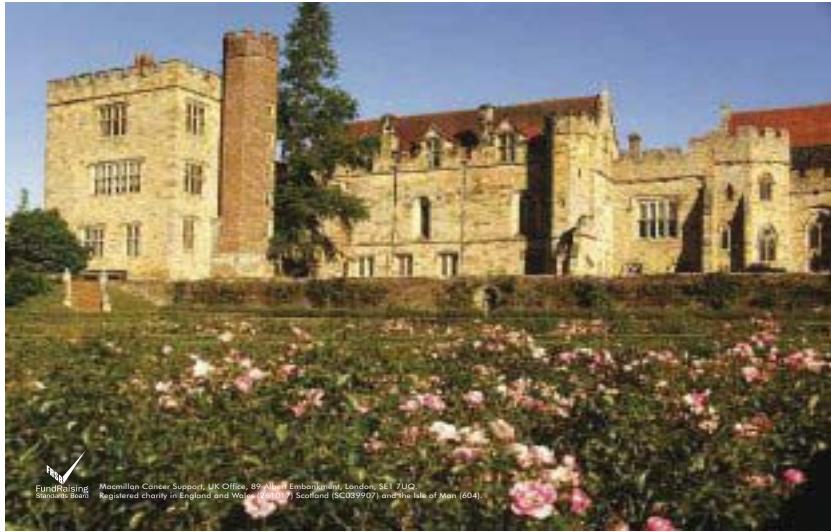
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PRICE INCLUDES: 4 nights in a twin or double en-suite chalet
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Isle of Wight Summer Holiday at Warner Norton Grange

4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD

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Tour **NS7**

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Set among landscaped gardens, Norton Grange has a distinctly tropical feel. The resort overlooks the Solent and has a wide range of activities on offer, including a heated indoor pool, all-weather bowls, a fitness studio, archery, snooker, darts and more.

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Isle of Wight Christmas Party at Warner Norton Grange

3 NIGHTS ALL INCLUSIVE

Friday, November 27 to 30
Tour **NP11**

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£179

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It's just a silly phase they're going through

10cc are not in love, they're just on a 94-date tour

FOR nearly 40 years, 10cc has been entertaining audiences all over the world with its music.

The band became a real chart force during the 70s, releasing hits that still receive frequent airplay today, such as Dreadlock Holiday and the perennial favourite I'm Not In Love. Thanks to the enduring popularity of their songs and the ready availability of their music on the internet, 10cc is continuing to win new fans and has never really been off the road.

Frontman Graham Gouldman is a gifted songwriter who developed a love of music when he was just a small child. Just as he was beginning to listen to the radio, the airwaves were carrying the new sounds of skiffle and rock 'n' roll and Gouldman still feels the influence of artists like the Beatles today.

He played in a number of bands in the Manchester area from the early 60s onwards and wrote his first top 10 hit, For Your Love, at the age of just 19. However, he did not get to step into the limelight just yet – the

10cc

Various venues



Various dates

song was actually recorded by the Yardbirds. At that time Gouldman was a member of the Mockingbirds, which had landed a regular spot as a warm-up act for Top of the Pops. So Gouldman had to stand by and watch the audience go wild for the Yardbirds when they came on to sing his song.

By the time he formed 10cc in 1970 with singer-guitarist Eric Stewart and multi-instrumentalists Kevin Godley and Lol Creme, Gouldman had also written hits for the Hollies, Herman's Hermits and Jeff Beck. The band started out as a session group called Hotlegs and enjoyed a surprise hit with Neanderthal Man, before signing to Jonathan King's UK Records label and changing their name to 10cc, inspired by a male bodily function.

The follow-up, Rubber Bullets, topped the chart and really launched 10cc as a pop force to be reckoned

with, though success in the US was elusive until 1975 when unconventional ballad I'm Not In Love went to number two in the American charts.

Following the departure of Godley and Creme in 1976, Gouldman and Stewart carried on as a duo until 1984. Gouldman then teamed up with Andrew Gold to form Wax, their most memorable hit being Bridge To Your Heart, and 10cc members reunited in the early 90s to record the album Meanwhile...

Now the band is in the middle of a mammoth 94-date tour, encompassing five countries, and Kent fans will have the chance to see them perform when they visit the county in May. The current line-up, led by Gouldman, comprises lead guitarist Rick Fenn, drummer Paul Burgess, Mick Wilson on percussion and guitar and Mike Stevens on keyboards, guitar and saxophone.

10cc will be performing at the Central Theatre in Chatham on Saturday; the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on Friday, May 8, and the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on Thursday, May 21.

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KIMMIE RHODES

Monday, May 4
Zebra Bar, Maidstone

A CULT figure on the country music scene, Kimmie Rhodes has been making music for more than 25 years.

Over the years the Texan artist has built up a catalogue of noteworthy music and her songs have been recorded by the likes of Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Trisha Yearwood, Amy Grant, John Fareham, Mark Knopfler and Emmylou Harris.

This prolific artist has released 12 solo albums, written and produced three musical plays, written hundreds of songs and published a book. She uses her creativity to explore a wealth of different topics and these eclectic interests are reflected on her latest album, Walls Fall Down. Songs cover issues as diverse as politics, cosmic imaginings and straightforward Americana.

Rhodes' special guest will be Kent's own Roger Humphries, who has been a mainstay of the British country-rock scene for more than 25 years.

The concert starts at 7.45pm and tickets cost £11 in advance or £13 on the door. To book call 01622 744481.



SCOOBY DO AND THE PIRATE GHOST

Thursday to Sunday,
May 7-10
Assembly Hall Theatre,
Tunbridge Wells

SCOOBY-DOO and the gang make a spectacular return next week in their latest stage show.

A favourite with both parents and children, the much-loved Hanna Barbera characters set out to solve another thrilling mystery in Scooby-Doo and The Pirate Ghost. Audiences can join Scooby, Shaggy, Velma, Daphne and Fred as they investigate in true Mystery Inc style.

There will be lots to entertain all the family as the beloved dog and his pals encounter baffling clues, pirate ghosts and, of course, plenty of Scooby snacks. The



hapless pooch and his friend Shaggy are thrown into one hilarious situation after another, demonstrating the classic physical comedy that has made the show so popular. With popular tunes and exciting effects thrown in,

there is plenty of entertainment on offer for all ages.

Tickets are priced £15.50 to £19.50, concessions available. To book call 01892 530613/532072 or visit the website at www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

SWEEPS FESTIVAL

Saturday to Monday, May 2-4
Various venues, Rochester

CELEBRATE May Day in style with the 29th annual Rochester Sweeps Festival this bank holiday weekend.

Musical highlights will include one of the folk scene's most recognisable faces, Kate Rusby, who will perform in Rochester Castle Gardens on Saturday, supported by five-piece harmony group Kimber's Men. On Sunday folk-rock heroes Strawbs will play at the same venue, with support provided by singer-songwriter Lupen Crook.

There will be an array of entertainment on offer during the festival which features street entertainers, local chimney sweeps, Morris sides and live music. An atmosphere of revelry will prevail over the long weekend, beginning with the traditional Jack-In-The-Green awakening ceremony at Blue Bell Hill at dawn (5.32am) on Friday and will reach a finale with the bank holiday procession through the streets from 2.45pm on Monday.

Tickets for the Rochester Castle Gardens concerts cost £18 for Kate Rusby and £16 for Strawbs. To book call 01634 338338 or see www.medway.gov.uk/theatrebooking.

For full festival listings see www.medway.gov.uk/sweepsfestival.



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MAIDSTONE LEISURE

Electro-pop master to remix tunes for DJ set

RADIO 1 DJ Kissy Sell Out is the next top name to appear at Beluga Bar's mid-week student night, Positive+ Education.

The electro-pop prodigy has taken the world by storm, remixing tracks by great artists such as Groove Armada and Gwen Stefani. He will be at the Bank Street bar from 9pm on Tuesday. Entry is £4/£3, call 01622 761300 or email Maidstone@belugabar.com.

There's fun for all the family at county fair

FROM ferret racing to falconry, there is plenty to see and do at Kent County Fair.

Running from Saturday to Bank Holiday Monday, the fair will feature show jumping, dog agility, rabbit displays, stalls, dedicated family zones, music, dance and more. It will be at the Hop Farm, Paddock Wood, and camping is available, call the Hop Farm on 01622 872068 or see www.thehopfarm.co.uk.

Buskers booked to jazz up a day in the shops

SHOPPERS at The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, can enjoy live jazz on Saturday.

String Theory will be serenading people with swing-style jazz tunes from the 20th century, along with modern day tunes during three one-hour sets as they busk around the town between 11am and 4pm.

For more details see www.thepan tilesonline.co.uk.

Premiere opportunity to see translated play

WITNESS a world premiere when Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells hosts the English translation of Dario Fo's Francis, The Holy Jester.

A range of characters from 13th century Italy are brought to life in this humorous play by the Nobel Prize-winning playwright. The show runs until May 9. Tickets cost £15/£13, call 01892 678678 or visit www.trinitytheatre.net.

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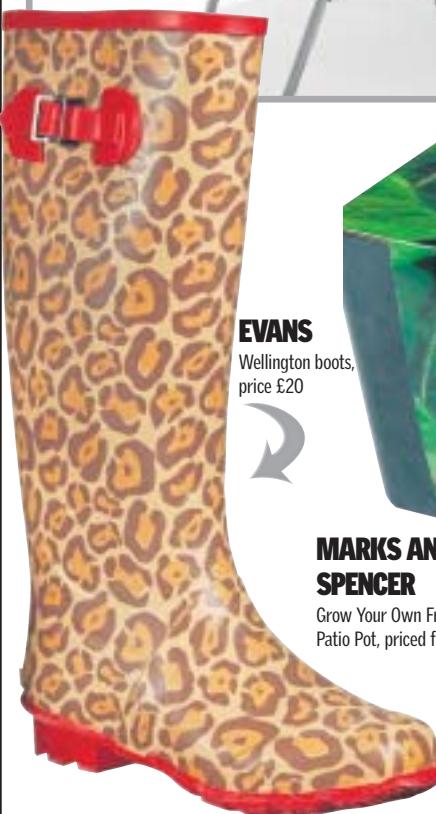
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MAIDSTONE SHOPPING

Motor along to Fremlin Walk for classic day out

CELEBRATE the May Day Bank Holiday weekend with a classic car and motorcycle show in a shopping precinct.

Fremlin Walk and Earl Street will be filled with classic cars and motorcycles on Sunday, May 3, including rare models from the 1920s, 1950s and 1960s, giant American Cadillac Eldorados, US Cobras and kit cars. All vehicles are owned by local enthusiasts and will be on display from 10.30am to 4.30pm, with parking and refreshments available.

Get summer reading at discount prices today

BOOKWORMS will be able to stock up on a range of books this summer with major discounts at Waterstones.

The book store chain, which has branches in Earl Street and in Fremlin Walk, is offering customers 40 per cent off its Best Seller titles, and 50 per cent off selected children's books.

Titles on offer include the late Jade Goody's biography Fighting to the End, The Audacity of Hope by Barack Obama and BBC Proms Guide 2009.

Tent discounts online, what a sales pitch

BANK holiday camping trips are even more affordable, thanks to Millets' online discounts on tents.

At the time of writing, the outdoor supplies store was offering substantial savings on a range of tents when bought from its website. Save £30 on the trendy Hed Kandi Boudoir Tent, reduced to £39.99, or enjoy a £50 saving on the Outwell Maine L Tent, now priced at £249.99. See the full range of web promotions online at www.millets.co.uk.

Coleen gets Upfront and Personal with you

FORMER pop star Coleen Nolan will be signing copies of her new autobiography at Bluewater next week.

As a star of *Loose Women* and *Dancing On Ice*, Nolan has regained her place in the nation's affections. The book, *Upfront & Personal*, tells the story of her exciting childhood, the breakdown of her marriage to TV star Shane Richie, her periods of depression and how she found happiness again. Nolan will be at Waterstone's from 1pm to 2pm on Wednesday, May 6.

It's fresh and original in Tunbridge Wells

PICK up some delicious produce or original crafts at The Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells this weekend. On Saturday local producers will be offering their fresh seasonal food at the farmers' market, while on Sunday Kent artisans showcase their beautiful, hand-made items at the outdoor craft market.

Both events will run from 10am to 4pm in the Upper Pantiles of the shopping area. For more information visit the website at www.thepantilesonline.co.uk.

“Sparkle and Shine”

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Strictly Come Dancing Stars
Andrew Cuerden and Hanna Haarla

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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY TOM BETTS

THE SPEAKER

BBC Two, 8pm, Wednesday

KATIE AND PETER: THE NEXT CHAPTER STATESIDE

ITV 2, 9pm, Thursday

IT'S been a showcase for the most annoying young people in the country to talk their way into everyone's bad books, so it is probably for the best that The Speaker is coming to an end.

There have been a few good performers, but by and large this has been a bit pointless and it's hard to imagine that anyone out there has really been enthralled by the search – especially as so many of the more interesting contestants were given their cards early on.

In tonight's final the last three young orators meet up with Obi Wan Kenobi, or Ewan McGregor as he's more commonly known in a galaxy closer to home.

The actor travels to Malawi with them to look at children's rights, which is bad news for him as he'll be stuck in another country with the gobby, opinionated little tykes.

On their return to Blighty they will let their tonsils loose once again to see who can deliver some kind of mesmerising piece of speech to judges comic Jo Brand, ex-basketballer John Amaechi and Jeremy Stockwell – you know, the luvvie with the beret.

Expect mentors Alastair Campbell, Deborah Meaden, Earl Spencer and Kate Silverton to offer a few last pearls of wisdom – you'd hope some of which might actually just be "shhhhhhhh!".

So who will claim the title of Britain's best young speaker and, furthermore, will anyone even care?

Taking boredom to new levels are orange Peter Andre and the even orangier Katie Price, who are currently



TALK IS CHEAP: Jeremy Stockwell, Jo Brand and John Amaechi, the judges on The Speaker

starring in their umpteenth own reality show. It's interesting only if to see what is happening to Jordan's – sorry, Katie's – face.

Her mug is starting to veer into Leslie Ash territory with a 'trout pout' that is verging on the utterly ridiculous.

It's the only interesting thing here.

Whether it's Peter having trouble with the barbecue, or the couple quarrelling about the decorating, no subject seems too banal for inclusion.

Maybe the next series will be called Katie And Peter Walk The Dogs or Katie And Peter Get Root Canal.

Every moment is memorised with no minuscule or pointless exchange too stupid from which to escape.

It really makes you wonder if this was the good stuff, what was left on the cutting-room floor?

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

MAKING your home more comfortable should be your first priority. Usually you don't place much emphasis on material goods, but taking the time to decorate your place with comfy furnishings, attractive artwork and delectable food helps your escapist side.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

THIS promises to be a very busy week for you. If you're going to maintain your sanity, you need to draw some strict boundaries. Above all, devote a few minutes each day to your own amusement. A few simple measures like these helps you to meet all of your varied obligations.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

TURN over a new leaf as far as money is concerned. Getting more value for your hard-earned cash is essential. These days you can do price comparisons very easily. If you can get it for less, do. It's also possible to get a raise so approach your boss with a list of accomplishments.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752

CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 22)

SPENDING time with friends will be great. It's been a long time since you were able to let your hair down with people you trust. If you've fallen out of touch with your nearest and dearest make a few phone calls. Your prolonged absence may have hurt some feelings.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755

LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)

SPARKS may be flying between you and someone close and it could be harder than you think to keep your feelings under control. Paying off a debt could finally become possible, too. By getting your bills out of the way you'll attain the financial freedom you've always desired.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)

AT long last you're finally able to relax and unwind. Whether you take a vacation or just devote more time to your favourite activities doesn't matter. The important thing is to put work on the back burner. This can be difficult for a person like you, but give it a try anyway.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

Calls cost 75p per minute. Service provided by g8wave London N7

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The holiday starts with an escorted **afternoon** departure on Eurostar from St Pancras International, London. We travel to Lille or Paris where, we break our journey with an overnight stay at a hotel. Early the next morning we join the TGV to Marseilles, arriving early-to-mid afternoon. From here we have a short transfer to the Orient Queen to start our 10-night cruise.

During the cruise, relax and watch the world go by, enjoy great food and entertainment, and venture ashore at the numerous ports of call. You can also choose from a comprehensive selection of optional shore excursions taking in: **Portofino, Pompeii, Athens, Ancient Ephesus, Mount Etna** and more.

At the end of the cruise we disembark after breakfast in Marseilles and take the TGV to Lille or Paris where we join the Eurostar to St Pancras, London, arriving early-to-mid evening.

INCLUDED: Escorted from London • Return Eurostar & TGV to Marseilles • 1 night in Lille or Paris • 10-night cruise aboard the Orient Queen - based on 2 people sharing a standard inside cabin (outside cabin from £1,159pp; sole occupancy cabin from £1,199pp) • All meals on board (breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea & dinner each day) • Entertainment on board



For more information and bookings call **01895 83 33 33**

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It's fun and laughter away at sea

■ BY MICHAEL O'FLAHERTY

YOU'RE joking! That was my reaction when I was invited to learn the art of cracking jokes on a comedy cruise sailing from Nice to Menorca in the Mediterranean.

And so I found myself on-stage aboard the good ship Island Star, trying to make 350 people laugh.

To say I was terrified would be the understatement of the decade.

Earlier in the day, for the cost of a fiver, I had taken a comedy 'master class' with instructor Miles Crawford, from the comedy group Jongleurs.

Before I braved the spotlight, Miles told me how to engage the audience, how to present myself and my material... and, above all, delivery.

So, in trembling tones, I delivered my short joke: 'I was driving in Ireland from Cork to Donegal. I was very tired and stopped at a small hotel. I knocked on the door. A yawning night-porter came to the door.'

'I asked if he had a room. 'No trouble at all,' he said. 'You wouldn't happen to have a room with a bath?' I asked. 'That's no trouble either,' said the porter.

'He pulled down a key and said 'You're in room number seven, sir... and the room with the bath is at the end of the corridor'.'

Laughter, applause! I was made! I introduced the next act and exited left.

I had flown to Pisa to join the Island Star in the middle of a Mediterranean cruise. Formerly called Horizon, with 10 decks and 753 comfortable cabins for 1,875 passengers tended by 573 crew, this impressive ship will be joining the Celebrity Cruises fleet during 2009.



JOKES AHOY: Onboard the comedy cruise ship Island Star, travelling from Nice to Menorca in the Mediterranean

It follows the merger of First Choice with Thomson within the TUI travel giant.

The Island brand stands for casual cruising, with a slogan of "relaxed, informal and friendly".

Guided bike tours are another innovation. Some of my fellow passengers had survived a bike ride into Rome through its snarling, chaotic traffic. They were therefore well equipped for the relatively calm bike tour I took after we docked in the beautiful port of Mahon in Menorca.

We set off on well-equipped mountain bikes with what seemed like dozens of gears. I struggled up the first hill and enjoyed a quiet ride out into the country.

Our ultimate goal, after more muscle-aching hills, was the beautiful beach of Binibeca, where I had a swim and bewailed my increasing saddle-soreness, and finally made it back to the ship exhausted after a 24-mile ride.

At dinner I was recognised by some of the

passengers – the result of the comedy night. I was a celebrity! Then I saw they were laughing again – at my bandy-legged, saddle-sore walk.

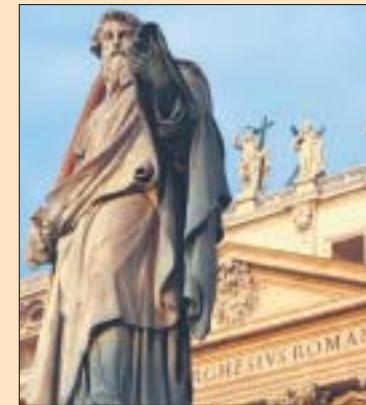
That night I enjoyed a gourmet dinner in the elegant Oasis restaurant. There are also seven bars, ranging from The Pub, which is as its name sounds, to the quieter, wood-panelled Captain's Club.

The Oasis is the only restaurant on the ship where people dress for dinner and costs extra, as did the slightly less formal Steak House; the other restaurants are free.

And what of my fellow passengers? Relaxed, friendly and informal, as indicated by the slogan of the ship.

If any of us had wished to get married on board, it would have been no problem at all – nor would special anniversary and birthday celebrations... even a renewal of wedding vows. But I was happy to stick to the jokes.

FACT FILE: MEDITERRANEAN



WHEN IN ROME: Enjoy a day in this fascinating city

Travel Facts

- Michael O'Flaherty was a guest of Island Cruises, which offers seven-night Western Mediterranean fly-cruises out of Palma, Majorca, from March 31, 2009, from £649, calling at Olbia (Sardinia), Civitavecchia (Rome), Livorno (Florence/Pisa), Villefranche (France) and Mahon (Menorca). Price is based on two adults sharing inside cabin on Aqua deck and includes return flights and transfers.

- Guided bike tours cost £29, except a full day in Rome, which is £49.

- Although Michael O'Flaherty's comedy master class with Jongleurs cost only £5, it sadly won't be available in 2009 – although Island Escape will carry professional comedians to entertain passengers through summer 2009.

- Island Escape enquiries: 0127 362 7843 and www.islandcruises.com.

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PROPERTY NEWS

Rise in unemployment prompts rent warning

LANDLORDS are being urged to find ways to ensure they receive their rent as the jobs market is so precarious.

Property website Smartlandlord.co.uk advised those renting out homes to be extra cautious after it released figures showing an increasing number of unemployed people were renting.

A year ago only 3.1 per cent of new tenants renting private property were unemployed but that figure has risen to 7.8 per cent.

Keshav Thukaram, managing director of Smartlandlord, said: "With the social housing sector ill-equipped to cope with the extra demand, private landlords are increasingly being called upon to take in unemployed people on benefit.

"There is evidence that some landlords are suffering because benefits aren't being paid on time, so landlords taking this route must ensure they know their rights, and apply to have the rent paid directly by the council if they experience problems."

The numbers of self-employed and retired tenants have also risen. Mr Thukaram urged landlords to run checks on new tenants, but also to ensure rents are secure should their tenants' financial circumstances change.

Negative equity is back but burden is shared

RESEARCH by the Council of Mortgage Lenders shows negative equity – where a home is worth less than its mortgage – has become an increasing problem because of falling house prices.

However, the group added that two thirds of those with negative equity were experiencing only "modest shortfalls" of ten per cent or less, and the scale of the issue needs to be kept in perspective, as home-owners still have about £2.1 trillion of unmortgaged housing equity.

Bob Pannell, the council's head of research, said: "Although negative equity has resurfaced as house prices have fallen, one big difference from the early 1990s downturn is that it is less concentrated among young, first-time buyers, and more evenly spread across wider age groups and those at different points on the housing ladder."

At the bottom of the last housing market recession in 1993, 1.5 million households were in negative equity.

The council said today's borrowers were following the pattern seen in the 1990s and choosing to stay put, waiting to recover their equity position.



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Missed opportunity as Chancellor overlooks needs of the market

■ BY NICK AMES

THE Budget for the next financial year has come under fire from two influential groups for not doing enough to help lift the property market out of the slump.

The Association of Residential Letting Agents (Arla) attacked Chancellor Alistair Darling's Budget, announced in the Commons last week, calling it "wholly unsatisfactory" for having failed to give incentives for landlords to improve rental housing for a growing number of tenants.

And the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) said the policies put forward were ineffectual and would do nothing to help the economy recover.

It wanted more to be done to encourage first-time buyers on to the housing ladder to get the market going again.

Ian Potter, operations manager of Arla, said: "Alistair Darling had a clear opportunity to improve the bottom end of the rental market and chose to maintain the status quo for Britain's worse-off tenants.

"Yet again Gordon Brown's administration has wasted an opportunity to improve the quality of stock of lettings property by failing to incentivise landlords through tax relief on labour and materials.

"Not only would this have helped to stimulate the market, particularly in the construction sector, but it would also have provided the greater standards of rented accommodation that this country desperately needs.

"Landlords should be recognised for what they bring not only to the housing market but to the wider economy and treated as any other responsible business."

In its Budget submission, Arla also called on the Government to introduce capital allowances for landlords improving housing stock over a certain age.

A second attack came from the influential estate agents' group who said there was no help for those trying to get on the housing ladder.

Peter Bolton King, chief executive of NAEA, said: "The housing market is the engine of the UK economy and it is likely that this Budget will be remembered as largely ineffectual, given the magnitude of the problem.

"There is very little here for first-time buy-



Picture: REX FEATURES

MONEY BOX: Chancellor of the Exchequer Alistair Darling outside 11 Downing Street on Budget day

ers, who need more encouragement to climb on to the property ladder which will get everything moving.

"Mr Darling has used a water pistol to try to put out a fire."

Mr Bolton King also attacked the extension of the £175,000 stamp duty land tax threshold as not going far enough to make any significant impact.

He said: "Merely extending the stamp duty threshold is disappointing. Mr Darling had a real opportunity to get rid of this hated tax,

which is seen by many as a tax on aspiration.

"Since the threshold was introduced last autumn it has helped just one third of first-time buyers.

"In this difficult economic time, Mr Darling could have seized the opportunity to encourage first-time buyers to the market and to send a signal of confidence that may have reverberated around the economy.

"Instead he has tried to choose a path to please everyone, which I suspect will please no one."

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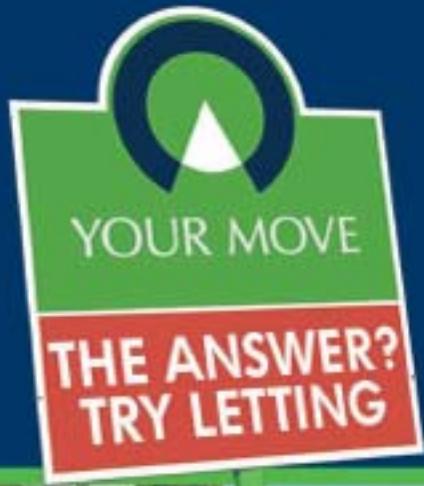


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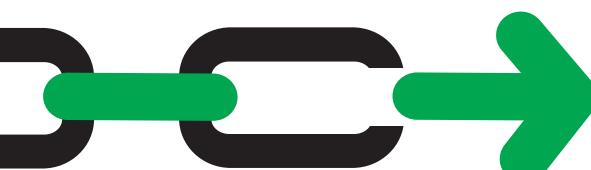
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Apartments Available • Both With Two Bedrooms • Two Good Sized Bedrooms • 1 With Ensuite Shower 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Bedroom Mid Terrace House • Arranged Over Three Floors • Two Reception Rooms • Bathroom, Separate Shower 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Bedroom Family House • Front And Rear Gardens • Large Kitchen/Dining Room • Good Location 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Bedroom House • Two Reception Rooms • Modern Kitchen With Appliances • Gas Central Heating 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Bed Semi Detached House • Living Room With Dining Area • Kitchen With Appliances • Off Road Parking For 3 Cars 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Bed Town House • Riverside Location • 3 En Suite Bathrooms • 2 Balconies With River Views 	

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£114,995

This apartment has river views, lounge/diner, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms plus parking. A definite must see.



£135,000

Don't judge this book by its cover, a hallway leading to lounge, dining room and kitchen and three bedrooms to the first floor.



£149,995

Victorian home, popular Barming area, lounge and dining room plus cellar room, upstairs bathroom. Call us today.



Offers in excess of £160,000

3 bedroom family home has off road parking, lounge leading through to kitchen, cellar currently used as dining room and bathroom.



£174,995

Refurbished and renovated house is one to view, refitted kitchen, relaid carpets, replastered and redecorated rooms, replaced bathroom.



£180,000

Two bedroom top floor apartment that must be viewed. Lake views, parking and Ensuite bathroom. Surprisingly spacious.



£219,995

Unusual house, unique accommodation over two storeys, each of which is split level, garage and driveway.



£224,995

Converted ragstone bungalow occupies a good size plot including lawns and shingle areas, parking to the side.



£499,995

Detached family home, cul-de-sac position, executive home is offered for sale in Penenden Heath. Must be viewed to be appreciated fully.

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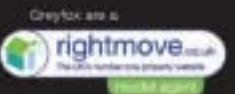
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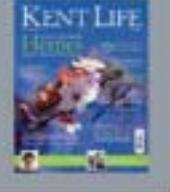
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- DOUBLE GARAGE
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Isle of Sheppey

- 3 BED DETACHED BUNGALOW
- TWO RECEPTION ROOMS
- EDWARDIAN STYLE CONSERVATORY
- APPROX QUARTER OF ACRE PLOT

REF: 00000168

**OIEO £350,000**

REF: 00000168



Rainham

- SPECTACULAR 4 BEDROOM DETACHED
- 2 ACRE PLOT
- COUNTRY LANE LOCATION
- 3 RECEPTIONS, 2 BATHROOMS



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- PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS
- PLANNING FOR EXTENTIONS
- ELECTRONIC GATES TO DRIVEWAY

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- STUNNING 5 BEDROOM DETACHED
- 2 EN-SUITES/FAMILY BATHROOM
- SOUGHT AFTER VILLAGE LOCATION
- GARDENS TO FRONT AND REAR

REF: 00000002



£525,000

- CLOSE TO EBBSFLEET STATION
- UNDERFLOOR HEATING DOWNSTAIRS
- LUXURY KITCHEN
- VILLAGE LOCATION

REF: 0000000010



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MOTORS NEWS



VW dealer defies motor sales trend on used cars

BEADELS VW of Maidstone has bucked the economic trend by boosting used car sales 32 per cent in 2009's tricky first quarter. Sales overall are up six per cent too against early 2008.

Keith Dowle, brand manager at the Quarry Wood site, attributed the sales team's (pictured) success in challenging times to pricing plus strong branding and residual values. He said the showroom had also been praised for customer service, monitored using mystery shopper and customer satisfaction surveys.



Barretts Jaguar is the tops with customers

BARRETTS Jaguar of Canterbury has taken the number one slot in Jaguar UK's customer loyalty and satisfaction award.

Key factors included good customer relationships, ensuring cars were delivered on time and dealing with any subsequent needs professionally and efficiently.

Accepting the 2008 award at a ceremony in Vienna, sales manager Jon Mason (pictured left with Jaguar UK sales director David Lewis) said: "Here at Barretts Jaguar we have always been proud of going that extra mile."



Meaner and leaner the new Freelander arrives

LAND Rover's most fuel-efficient vehicle ever is now available at Barretts, Ashford.

Dealer principal Mark Nicholas, said there had been eager anticipation of the new Freelander 2 TD4e with stop-start, which cuts the engine to avoid unnecessary fuel use and emissions when stopped and then smoothly restarts it when needed, saving some 20 per cent fuel in traffic.

Mr Nicholas said: "Sophisticated controls ensure the Stop/Start system does not compromise the needs of either the driver or the dynamics of the vehicle."



TOUGH LOVE: Keenly-priced and racy looking, the estate version of the Kia Ceed SW looks impressive against the more conventional looking Ford Focus, Vauxhall Astra and VW Golf

Family workhorse comes with thoroughbred appeal

ROAD TEST KIA CEED SW

■ BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal



Image



Space



Value



Running costs



Reliability



Green rating



(503 and 1546), Vauxhall Astra (470 and 1550) and new VW Golf Estate (505 and 1550).

Equally impressive is the 113bhp 1.6-litre diesel of our £15,545 LS-spec test car. It is a cracking all-rounder for a potentially hard-working estate car like this and can average nearly 60mpg. It is easily the best power option, though you can also have a 120bhp 1.6-litre petrol, 89bhp 1.6 diesel or 138bhp 2.0 diesel.

And you can forget about plasticky Korean interiors of the past with the intoxicating whiff of Airfix modelling glue; the Ceed range has been designed to be European and is churned out in a state-of-the-art plant in Slovakia with the fit, finish and touch of the interior matching Western standards and even includes an iPod/MP3 player connection that really does work... unlike some.

However, the Ceed's ride can be fidgety and it feels vague when pushed hard on a winding road, though grip is good.

On the other hand, you should view the Ceed SW more as an unbreakable workhorse pitched against van-based MPVs and the likes of Skoda's Roomster and Vauxhall's Meriva, as well as Focus-class estates.

With prices from £12,995, it's a no-brainer.



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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

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HONDA ACCORD



IS it a prestige badge or not? Even Honda is unclear about that. There is no doubt Honda quality, but everyday models like the Jazz supermini – though a marvellous car – harm Honda's argument that the Accord deserves mention alongside the BMW 3-Series. Nevertheless, the Honda is beautifully made, offers a sporting drive and is probably the car least likely to fail en route to a top-level meeting. The diesel's quiet and refined too and the previous generation estate is capacious.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

JAGUAR X-TYPE



IT was a slow burn for X-Type sales, highlighted by faltering residuals in the early days. Jag snobs didn't like it being derived from the front driven Mondeo, although Ford-owned Jaguar deflected this by offering the car in Audi-style all-wheel drive only at first. But the 'X' is reliable, drives well in all forms and the smooth diesels and a lovely estate (pictured) redeemed its status. However, used values have stumbled recently and there are serious bargains to be had.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

VOLVO S40



OUR smallest contender here, and Volvo's best-ever junior model by far, the S40 shows all the benefits of belonging to the Ford empire while retaining its own Swedish style. It is built on a modified front-driven Ford Focus chassis – nothing wrong there as it's one of the best for keen drivers – while the styling is pure Volvo, complete with scalloped rear wings and tail lights. Inside, is classic Scandinavian too: neat and well arranged, plus an innovative 'flying' centre console.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★



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Fusion + 1.6 in Ocean Blue with Full LeatherWAS £15,565.00 NOW £11,995.00	Focus Zetec-S in Sea Grey with Privacy GlassWAS £18,590.00 NOW £13,998.67
Focus Style 1.8 in Moondust SilverWAS £17,215.00 NOW £12,625.00	Focus Titanium 1.6 in AvalonWAS £18,465.00 NOW £14,677.95
Focus Style 1.8 in AvalonWAS £17,215.00 NOW £12,625.00	Mondeo ECOnetic 1.8TDCi in TangoWAS £19,890.00 NOW £14,800.00
Focus C-Max Zetec 1.8 in TangoWAS £17,815.00 NOW £13,443.53	Focus Titanium 1.8 3dr in Panther Black with X Pack WAS £19,240.00 NOW £16,205.34

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WEST HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
DARTFORD ROAD, DARTFORD, KENT DA1 3DZ
TEL: 01322 226019 FAX: 01322 220121

E-mail: office@west-hill.kent.sch.uk
Age range: 5-11 N.O.R. 490
Headteacher: Mrs Pauline Hindle

Do you wish to join a lively talented and friendly staff?

Post 1

REQUIRED FOR SEPTEMBER 2009 A KS1 OR LOWER KS2 TEACHER

We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic teacher to work in KS1 or Year 3 or Year 4. This position would be suitable for experienced teachers and NQT's. Applicants are asked to identify curriculum areas in which they can offer expertise. The school has a commitment to the professional development of staff.

Post 2

TEMPORARY POSITION REQUIRED FROM SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009 A 0.4 FTE UPPER KS2 TEACHER (WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF THIS BEING EXTENDED)

A teacher to release the deputy head for 2 days each week. The successful applicant must be committed to high expectations, have a thorough knowledge of the National Curriculum and the Year 6 curriculum. Applicants must be committed to fully contribute to the life of the school.

West Hill is a successful and popular school with well behaved and motivated children. At the heart of the school's philosophy is the development of the whole child.

If you would like to learn more about the school please send for an information pack. Visits to the school are warmly welcomed.

Completed application forms should be forwarded to the headteacher by 8th May 2009.

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To find out more please contact:
Human Resources
0800 376 7890

or email your CV to: shelley.metson@kent.cwea.co.uk

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Flexi hours, Part or full time, 18+

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Ashbridge Domestic Appliances

We require a qualified Domestic Appliance Engineer.

Good rates of pay and benefits including vehicle, healthcare, training & uniform.

C.V's to: Mr Pluckrose,
Ashbridge Domestic Appliances,
Unit 2, Bridge Rd, Ashford,
Kent, TN23 1BB

WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

We are looking to recruit a VICTIM LIAISON OFFICER

to work within the

Folkestone Youth Offending Team helping victims of crime access Restorative Justice processes.

Starting salary 19,500pa

– Own car essential (mileage allowance paid)

The post holder will need to have good communication and IT skills. Training will be provided.

For an application pack please email mediationscheme@btconnect.com

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Class 2 drivers for food delivery, 20 - 30 drops. Fridge & Multidrop experience preferred. Based out of Aylesford.

Class 1 & 2 drivers for drinks delivery. Previous dray experience preferred. Based in Crayford & Faversham

PCV drivers for general coach work. Private hire, Rail replacement, School runs. Based in Gravesend, Medway, Maidstone & Aylesford. £9.00/hr, guaranteed 8hrs pay.

For information on these and other vacancies please call **Andy** or **Alex** on 01622 664999

AGE
Concern

MAIDSTONE

Good Traditional Cook required

Full time and Part time cook required at our Day Centres. Part time required to work 3 days a week, 9am to 2pm Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays plus occasional agreed extra days to cover for staff annual leave.

Are you capable of:

Cooking up to 40 meals plus per day • Planning menus

And have:

Good basic cooking skills in traditional style meals

Food hygiene certificate (training can be provided) • Full clean driving licence

RGN/SEN Footnurses required with current NMC essential

Must be willing to travel throughout Borough of Maidstone. Full driving license and own transport essential. Training provided.

Remuneration for each client treated will be paid plus travelling expenses.

For application form etc please phone 01622 753618, or visit 11 Mill Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6XW

Both positions will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Criminal Records Bureau.



Manager - County Youth Choirs

Working for Kent's renowned music provider Kent Music this is an exciting post which will require someone with a musical background and management experience to manage the day to day operation of the County Choirs.

The post is permanent and it is expected the post holder will work a minimum of 780 hours per annum. Please see our website for full details of salary and hours.

For more information please contact Denise Milne at Kent Music on 01622 358435 or dmilne@kent-music.com or go to our website: www.kent-music.com to download an application form.

Deadline for applications 1st May with interviews the following week.

Abbey Court School "WE GROW PEOPLE"

Abbey Court School provides a stimulating, challenging and safe learning environment where pupils and staff efforts, work and achievement are celebrated.

We are currently looking for a

TEACHER FOR PUPILS WITH SEVERE AND PROFOUND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES TO COMMENCE SEPT 2009

MPS + 2 SEN Points + TLR 2C (with previous experience) £2422

The school is located in pleasant surroundings and we have educational resources of enviable proportions. This post would suit newly qualified teachers or those wishing to gain further experience of SEN. Comprehensive induction and training will be provided.

Telephone enquiries and informal visits to the school welcome

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing Date: 8th May 2009

For further details and a job description, please contact Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3SP. (Tel: 01634 338224), stating the position for which you are applying.

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MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Learning Resource Centre Assistant

37 hours per week, 40 weeks per year

Salary: £9,939 - £17,750 pro rata

We are looking for an enthusiastic candidate to assist the efficient running of the Learning Resource Centre, ensuring the delivery of high quality, customer focused, easily accessible services to all users. The successful candidate will be responsible for Library administrative and organisational duties and have good communication and IT skills.

Ref: P0282

Lecturer in Hair Design

22 hours per week

Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 pro rata

We have an exciting opportunity to recruit a passionate individual to teach assess and contribute to the development of Hair Design programmes. The applicant must have a relevant vocational/academic qualification and should hold or be willing to work towards a teaching qualification. Recent industry experience would be advantageous.

Ref: P0342

Technician in Beauty

Salary: £11,479 - £17,750

The College is looking to recruit a highly motivated individual to provide guidance and support to learners and assist with the running of various Clinics. You will be able to demonstrate good organisational and communication skills and relevant experience within the beauty industry would be advantageous.

Ref: P0277

Administrative Apprentice

Salary: £6,171

As a member of the Business Development Team you will provide administrative support to the College stakeholders. The successful candidate will develop competencies to meet NVQ Level 2 Standards of performance.

Ref: P0594

Hourly Paid Lecturer in Plumbing and Heating

Ref: SE004

£20.37 - £28.67 per hour

An opportunity has arisen within the Construction and Engineering Department for a Lecturer to contribute to the delivery and development of Level 3 Plumbing, Heating and Gas Programmes. The successful candidate will have current knowledge of the Building Engineering Industry and a recognised teaching qualification or be willing to work towards one; an Assessors qualification would be advantageous.

Hourly Paid Lecturer in Business

Ref: SE005

£20.37 - £28.67 per hour

We are looking for an enthusiastic individual to teach BTEC National and First Diploma Business programmes. The successful candidate will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification and be able to deliver Key Skills to a level 2 standard.

Hourly Paid Lecturer in Healthcare

Ref: SE007

£20.37 - £28.67 per hour

The post holder will be involved in the delivery of Healthcare programmes. The successful candidate will have proven knowledge and experience within Healthcare environments and hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Hourly Paid Lecturer in Public Services

Ref: SE008

£20.37 - £28.67 per hour

We are seeking an enthusiastic Lecturer to teach a range of BTEC and school links programmes. The successful candidate will have relevant experience within Public Services and hold or be willing to work towards a teaching qualification.

Hourly Paid Lecturer in IT

Ref: SE006

£20.37 - £28.67 per hour

The College is looking to recruit a passionate individual to teach BTEC National and First Diploma IT programmes. The successful candidate will have or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification and be able to deliver Key Skills to a level 2 standard.

Hourly Paid Lecturer in Childcare

Ref: SE009

£20.37 - £28.67 per hour

We are looking to recruit an individual to deliver and teach Childcare programmes. The successful candidate will have proven knowledge and experience within Childcare environments and hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Closing date: Friday 15 May 2009

Mid-Kent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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£16k – £18k OTE (basic salary + uncapped commission)

Excellent benefits package | FOLKESTONE

Listening to customers. Taking the time to understand their needs. Building a real rapport with them. That's what we call doing things properly for our customers as we deliver great service, selling our products to people aged 50 and over.

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What's more, it means a friendly working environment – as well as all the training and support you need to do a terrific job.

The question is, have you got what it takes to be part of this fast-growing national company? You'll need to be target driven and able to rise to new challenges, that's for sure. But above all you must share our commitment to getting things right. Every time.

If it's time for you to enjoy the rewards you deserve please write enclosing your CV, quoting reference SVS294/KOS, to Alice Forsyth, HR Officer, Saga Group Limited, Enbrook Park, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3SE or e-mail: human.resources@saga.co.uk

Alternatively, please call 01303 774888 for an application form or download one from our website.

Closing date: 15 May 2009.

saga.co.uk



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Career Opportunities



Canterbury College is an equal opportunities employer

Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M Campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you.

Section Manager Construction Craft

08/12

37 hrs per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum

Lecturer Animal Care and Horse Studies

02/59

37 hrs per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum

Supply Lecturer Counselling

S/COU

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Supply Lecturer Higher Education - Fine Art

S/HE/FA

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Trainer Demonstrator Fabrication and Welding

TD3

37 hrs per week, salary starting from £18,963 per annum

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Proximity to main bus & train stations
- Close to City Centre
- Sports Hall & Gym
- Generous Holiday Allowance
- Staff Discount Scheme

The closing date for the above posts is Monday 11th May 2009 at 12 noon

CLICK
www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/job-vacancies

CALL
01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)



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Saint George's Church of England School

Meadow Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7LS

Tel: 01474 533082

Fax: 01474 533844

HEADTEACHER: Mrs A Southgate BDAKC
Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Humanities College
11-18, Mixed, Comprehensive School

PRINCIPAL TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

Required for September 2009

TLR1 (£8,975)

Following the promotion of the current post holder we wish to appoint an excellent classroom practitioner to inspire and lead our mathematics team. You will have the enthusiasm and energy to drive the development of effective teaching and learning for the 21st century.

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

Required for September 2009

Main Pay Scale

We are looking for a well-qualified and innovative mathematician.

Saint George's C of E School is a successful, innovative and over-subscribed comprehensive school. These posts come at an exciting time for the school as we are preparing for new buildings under Wave 4 of BSF.

Contact us to request further details and an application form.

Email dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk or visit our website

www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk

Closing Date: 8 May 2009

Rainham School for Girls

(A Specialist Technology College & Training School)
Derwent Way, Rainham, GILLINGHAM Kent ME8 0BX

(NOR 1570) Head Teacher: Mrs J Dunn

2 i/c Science Faculty - TLR 2a (currently £5,920)

We are seeking to appoint a well qualified and experienced teacher with good interpersonal, leadership and management skills to join the school in September 2009 as Second in Charge of the Science Faculty. The successful candidate will have high expectations of student achievement and proven excellence in classroom practice. Experience of teaching at KS5 is desirable to support expansion in this key stage.

Rainham School for Girls is a popular and successful non-selective school offering excellent opportunities for enthusiastic and ambitious applicants to contribute to its continuing development.

Any offer of employment for this post will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Application forms and further details are available from Mrs D Francis, Personnel Officer at the School.

Tel: 01634 362746, Fax: 01634 388334. Email: dfrancis@rsg.org.uk

Closing date: Monday, 11th May 2009

Fuji Seal Europe Ltd.

The Fuji Seal Group is the only shrink sleeve manufacturer offering a complete single source solution utilising its network of manufacturing operations in the UK, Netherlands, France, Poland, USA, Asia and Japan.

We are recruiting the following positions:

MIS TECHNICIAN 12 MONTH FIXED TERM CONTRACT

Maintenance of the computer network in the UK including PC's, Macs, printers and control of all IT consumables. Responsibilities to include proper security for the network, including virus protection, maintaining software applications and keeping an up to date inventory of IT hardware and software licences including regular PC audits to ensure full compliance with FAST membership. Full involvement in new software implementations is required including testing and training of end users. Responsibility also for the phone system and European intranet. Some database development and occasional support of the European operation.

Dreamweaver experience an advantage.

COSTING ASSISTANT

We are seeking a methodical, extremely accurate and detail orientated person to join our costing team.

Computer literate, with an enthusiasm and flair for data analysis, the jobholder will be responsible for preparing prices following requests from the sales department. You will also be responsible for checking quotations and invoices. The job holder will need to be flexible and able to adapt urgently at short notice, whilst maintaining the discipline necessary to keep on track with all the other requirements of the job.

The jobholder will have excellent verbal and numerical skills and be able to work to tight deadlines. Teamwork is essential and the ability to develop good working relationships both within the company and with external contacts is a must. Manufacturing background an advantage.

You'll enjoy a full range of employee benefits.

To apply please send your CV to HR Department, Fuji Seal Europe Ltd, Scimitar Close, Gillingham Business Park, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0RJ or alternatively you can email to jobs@fujiseal.com.

Previous applicants need not apply.

Closing date: 11 May 2009

STRICTLY NO AGENCIES PLEASE

Fuji Seal Europe are an equal opportunities employer.

FAVERSHAM UMBRELLA

Reg. Charity 1027436

Arden Next-Step Workshop for Young Adults



Requires an Assistant Workshop Manager

The Arden Workshop is a 'Big Lottery' funded Mental Health Project offering practical activity through Art, Crafts and Woodwork, to empower people to re-enter mainstream society.

The Assistant Workshop Manager must be motivated and self disciplined and have the ability to assist the Manager to both organise the daily running of the Workshops, and to have the skills required to instigate, activate and oversee the projects made in the Arden Workshop. Art/Craft and Woodworking skills are essential as you will need to provide art/craft and woodworking based activities. This is a position which requires a confident and responsible person who is patient and caring and has an empathy with vulnerable young adults. The position will require a CRB check.

Hours of work are Mon – Thurs inclusive 9.30 – 3.30. Salary £9360 rising to £9984 following a 3 month probationary period.

Applications should be made in writing to: The Centre Manager Faversham Umbrella, Umbrella Building, Court St. Faversham, Kent. ME13 7AT

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Please contact: 01227 362510 or Email: info@bencarefostering.co.uk

Web: www.bencarefostering.co.uk

THE KING'S SCHOOL CANTERBURY



Part-time Gardener

Required to work 20 hours per week at our Junior School in Sturry, Canterbury

There is a possibility that this post could become full-time in the future.

The King's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Criminal Records Bureau. For an application form, please email the School's Personnel Department on recruitment@kings-bursary.co.uk or telephone on 01227 595655 (24 hour answerphone) Closing date for receipt of completed application forms: 7th May 2009



HARBOUR SPECIAL SCHOOL

Elms Vale Road, Dover CT17 9PS

Tel: 01304 201964

E-Mail: admin@harbour.kent.sch.uk

Teaching Assistants

Kent Scheme, Band 3, Points 7-11 + SEN Allowance
£14,099 - £15,984 (pro-rata) 30 hours per week, term time only
Start: ASAP

Harbour Special School has a mixed roll of 96 students between the ages of 5 and 16. The school is a day special school for children with a combination of behaviour and learning needs. The completion of a 2-year building project in 2007 has seen the school accommodation extended and modernised with excellent new facilities now available.

The Governors are seeking to appoint two Teaching Assistants to join our dedicated and highly effective staff team who are bright, full of ideas and enjoy using their own initiative.

The successful candidates will work within the secondary phase supporting pupils with a range of behaviour and learning needs. Experience of working in a school environment with special needs pupils in particular, would be an advantage but is not essential as full training will be provided.

Ofsted (2006) describes the school as "outstanding in all areas", the school has an excellent reputation locally and it provides a challenging, productive and happy learning environment. The school has also gained the "Investors in People" standard and therefore places a high priority on professional and career development.

For more information and an application pack, please contact the school office.

Closing Date: Monday 11 May 2009

Interview Date: Thursday 14 May 2009

The school requires a completed application form - no CV's accepted



Dover · Online · Calais

e-Commerce Marketing Executive

THE ROLE

This is an exciting, varied role for an experienced Marketing Executive to work in a fun, friendly team. You need to be passionate about online marketing and taking an active role in all e-Commerce Marketing projects with the team.

The main responsibilities include:

- Maintenance of our website (ensuring it is always kept up to date) plus testing of new developments;
- Search Engine Optimisation and Pay Per Click activity management;
- Affiliate and partner relationship development and management;
- Creating and managing domains and microsites for the SeaFrance portfolio; and
- Assisting with the continued development of the Customer Relationship Management programme.

Key to this role is the ability to understand and influence consumers through online marketing to bring them through to the website and encourage them to book. Other areas of responsibility include running, updating and circulating reports for activities, liaising with external agencies and internal departments to ensure we maximise our revenue and co-ordinate activity.

THE PERSON

We're looking for someone who is dynamic, has a creative flair and can provide evidence of delivering in a fast-paced and focused online environment. Online Marketing experience is essential and must include an in-depth understanding of Search Engines and website usability. Knowledge of html and content management systems is preferable.

You must be educated to a minimum of A-level standard and have a CIM qualification or equivalent. A good command of the English language for writing copy is required as well as direct marketing experience to support our busy Marketing department.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

A competitive salary; 23 days holiday per year rising to 26 days, plus statutory holidays; contributory pension; life assurance cover and concessionary travel benefits.

To apply, please send your CV and covering letter detailing salary expectations to Human Resources, SeaFrance Ltd, Whitfield Court, Honeywood Close, Whitfield, Kent, CT16 3PX or email recruitment@seafrance.fr

Closing Date: 1 May 2009

seafrance.com

A.E.R. (KENT) LIMITED

Company No. 04533413

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at The Old Town Jail, 14-18 London Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1AJ on 06/05/2009 at 11.15 am for the purposes provided for in Sections 99, 100 and 101 of the said Act. At the meeting, creditors may be requested to consider a resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated and the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. For the purposes of voting, Proof of Debt and Proxy Forms to be used at the meeting must be lodged at the registered office of the company, now situated at 10, Station Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7JL. At the meeting, creditors may be requested to consider a resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated and the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. For the purposes of voting, Proof of Debt and Proxy Forms to be used at the meeting must be lodged at the registered office of the company, now situated at 10, Station Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7JL. The meeting, creditors may be requested to consider a resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated and the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. For the purposes of voting, Proof of Debt and Proxy Forms to be used at the meeting must be lodged at the registered office of the company, now situated at 10, Station Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7JL. 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BUSINESS BRIEFS

June date for next B2B exhibition at Ramada

BUSINESS Representation Solutions, a support service for business sales and marketing, is holding its next B2B – business to business – exhibition on Wednesday, June 10, at the Ramada Hotel in Hollingbourne.

It's open to all business attendees free of charge. There is no membership fee or other obligation in attending the exhibition, which will start at 9.30am.

There will be a networking breakfast and lunch. To book a stand and for further information, phone 01322 278311, email info@busrepsol.co.uk, or visit www.busrepsol.co.uk.

Debt recovery strategy workshop by law firm

LAW firm Furley Page is running the second of its interactive workshops tomorrow (Thursday) aimed at helping businesses create a debt recovery strategy in the recession.

In partnership with Kent Invicta Chamber, the workshop – at the Marriott Tudor Park Hotel, Maidstone – will be part seminar, part question and answer session. It starts at 8.30am, with breakfast, finishes at 11.45am, and is open to members and non-members alike.

Details on 01233 503838 or online at www.kentinvictachamber.co.uk.

Invicta's one-stop-shop

KENT Invicta Chamber of Commerce has compiled a one-stop-shop information source designed to direct companies to where help is available.

Chief executive Jo James said it had created a new section on its website at www.kentinvictachamber.co.uk.

This would allow businesses to find what is on offer to help them through the recession, rebuild business plans to match circumstances and recover from problems.

The chamber covers Ashford, Canterbury, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells.

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Kent 2020 Vision speaker Kriss Akabusi talks to Julie Maddocks. Search 'Kriss'

Leaner and greener in brave new world



SEE THE LIGHT: Seeda is managing the £2.9m pot available for low-carbon initiatives aimed at cutting costs and boosting profits

A POT of £2.9 million is available through the South East England Development Agency (Seeda) for low-carbon initiatives that it reckons will help more than 3,000 regional businesses cut costs and boost profits.

Half the money is from the European Regional Development Fund, and the other half from Seeda, which is setting up programmes covering sustainability issues and the three Rs – reduction, reuse and recycling.

It's all part of a wider range of targets, including an 89,000-tonne reduction in the growth rate of carbon dioxide emissions, a £3.2 million boost to the region's economy and the creation of hundreds of jobs.

Ona Muirhead, Seeda's executive director for skills and sustainable prosperity, said: "In these difficult economic conditions it's all the more important that we help businesses take advantage of new market opportunities in the growing global green economy."

"This is good for profit margins and employment, as well as for tackling the region's ecological footprint."

"This latest round of ERDF funding will help ensure projects that can contribute to a successful, sustainable future for the region don't fall by the wayside."

The funding forms part of the – wait for it – South East England European Regional Development Fund Competitiveness Programme 2007-13 that was approved in December 2007.

The South East was the first UK region to have the programme adopted.

A key priority will be encouraging tiny and slightly larger businesses to work together, forming groups that can benefit from better access to funding.

One of the initiatives covers training programmes for small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) – and that's most of

BY TONY PATEY

the firms in Kent – worth some £3,500 each if they want to go sustainable.

This is probably attractive to a lot of owners because customers are becoming more aware of sustainable and environmental business practices.

However, they'll be asked to invest in their companies so policies are carried out and companies will have to meet eligibility criteria.

The funding is in the hands of PLATOGB – an offshoot of Southern Enterprise Alliance, a private not-for-profit company – and it's for a two-year business and personal development programme.

Programme director Alexandra Massey said: "In these lean times, the green issue is having more of an impact than ever."

"If the consumer has the choice, locally-sourced products with a neutral carbon footprint are winning over something that's been flown in or has a heavy carbon footprint."

"This programme is about helping local companies implement a sustainable agenda, add a positive contribution to their marketing and make a difference to their profits."

Participants can go along to free induction seminars to learn more before going on the full programme – in Kent they are on Thursday, May 21, at Ashford International Hotel, from 4.30pm to 6pm, and on Tuesday, May 26, at the Holiday Inn, Rochester, at the same times.

Details from 0845 73545.

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IMPORTANT: Rob Key is hoping captaining the Lions will lead to a place in the England squad

Key hopes Lions' chance will push England ambition

ROB Key will aim to push his case for a call-up to the England Test squad when he captains the Lions team to play West Indies this week.

The four-day game against the tourists begins at Derby tomorrow, ruling the Kent skipper out of the County Championship game with Essex, which gets underway at Chelmsford today.

England national selector, Geoff Miller, said: "This is a really exciting summer for cricket in England and Wales and the Lions matches are excellent opportunities for players to push for England places."

"The Lions squads feature players who display qualities that are capable of winning matches for England, so these games are very important."

"Rob Key captained outstandingly well in New Zealand and then took the reins in similar fashion for the MCC in the champion county match, so he will continue to lead for the match against West Indies."

Key's fellow opener Joe Denly, however, has not been included in the squad and will therefore be available for Kent's game at Chelmsford, where Martin van Jaarsveld is likely to lead the side.

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 Gills boss Mark Stimson discusses how to deal with the lottery of the play-offs



ON THE BALL: Elliot Bradbrook (above left) beat the defence to create a great chance for a goal and (above right) manager Lloyd Hume played for the first time in two seasons



Picture: STEVE TERRELL

Stones end season with a standing ovation from fans

IT isn't often a team gets a standing ovation after losing its fifth straight game and having failed to score a goal in 498 minutes, but a young Maidstone side was applauded off the Bourne Park pitch on Saturday, having shown glimpses of a bright future.

For the first time in four seasons neither promotion nor relegation hinged on the result of the Stones' final game of the season and as a consequence of this, plus a rash of suspensions and injuries, nine reserves made the squad.

Yet they matched Billericay in almost every department and the only goal was down to two of United's most experienced players.

Nine minutes before the break neither Lloyd Hume, making his first start for over two seasons, nor Ryan Royston cut out Ashley Dumas' cross and Rikki Burbridge was gifted a simple finish from just outside the six-yard box.

FOOTBALL

■ BY FRED ATKINS

Maidstone United 0

Maidstone starting XI



Subs used: Foster (Hume 74) Fullone (Elliot 74) Pascal (Mooney 78)

In first half stoppage time the Stones should have equalised when Elliott Bradbrook beat a series of defenders and laid the ball on a platter for Ashley Dann, but with too much time to think, Dann screwed the chance wide.

It was an isolated error from a young player, but the side was still subjected to criticism from the main stand, from a couple of misanthropic windsacks who were intent on finding faults, like Stadler and Waldorf from the Muppet Show, but without the humour.

For once, gloriously, the usually silent majori-

ty of supporters revolted, shouting the moaners down and even Hume, whose relationship with the home fans hasn't always been convivial, was given an ovation when he finally came off with a quarter of an hour to play.

Maidstone's only real chance of an equaliser came on 63 minutes, when Dann squared the ball to Steve Elliott, who shot just over, but by this time nobody cared. After the tension of last season's final day survival act at Folkestone, mid-table obscurity was an overwhelming relief.

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Chairman is open to move away from Bourne Park

FOOTBALL

EXCLUSIVE

■ BY FRED ATKINS

MAIDSTONE United may have played their final game at Bourne Park after chairman Paul Bowden-Brown admitted he would listen to offers to ground-share away from Sittingbourne.

"It's no secret we had a seven-year agreement and it's come to an end," Bowden-Brown told Yourmaidstone. "We wouldn't be where we are today without (Sittingbourne chairman) Andy Spice, but I've got to go away and work out how I can cut our costs, while generating money for the team and the new stadium."

If a better deal is available elsewhere Maidstone could move, with Ebbsfleet, Tonbridge and Ashford all rumoured destinations.

Bowden-Brown acknowledged there was some substance to these stories: "I've been talking to Ashford chairman Don Crosbie about the people behind their planned Sports Village, because there are people there who might be able to bring the Stones home," he said. "But it would be silly to say we're going there because from what I hear they might be going into administration."



MOVE AWAY? Finances are in question as chairman Paul Bowden-Brown considers moving elsewhere

Informal talks have been held in the past with Ebbsfleet and Tonbridge, but Bowden-Brown remains hopeful an improved deal can be struck with Sittingbourne, despite sounding a warning about the game in general.

"Football's in a state," he said. "Gates will drop everywhere because of the economic climate and players will find they won't be able to get the same money next season. You'll always get the odd club prepared to pay over the odds, but we'll have a reduced budget

next season and so will a lot of other clubs."

Bowden-Brown confirmed joint-managers Alan Walker and Lloyd Hume would be staying next season, but says the make-up of the squad won't be known until May 31, when the duo hand him their retained list. No players have yet indicated they want to leave, but Bowden-Brown said: "For some players the game is their only source of income, so I'd understand if they got offers elsewhere and thank them for what they've done for us."

LEAGUE TABLE

RYMAN PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Dover Athletic	42	33	5	4	+57	104
2 Staines Town	42	23	13	6	+34	82
3 Tonbridge Angels	42	20	13	9	+28	73
4 Carshalton Athletic	42	19	11	12	+1	68
5 Sutton United	42	18	13	11	+4	67
6 AFC Hornchurch	42	19	8	15	+9	65
7 Wealdstone	42	18	8	16	+14	62
8 Dartford	42	17	11	14	+13	62
9 Tooting & Mitcham	42	16	10	16	+0	58
10 Ashford Town (Mx)	42	18	2	22	-2	56
11 Billericay Town	42	15	11	16	-12	56
12 Canvey Island	42	16	7	19	-5	55
13 Horsham	42	16	7	19	-11	55
14 Harrow Borough	42	14	12	16	-17	54
15 Maidstone United	42	14	11	17	-5	53
16 Hendon	42	15	6	21	+4	51
17 Hastings United	42	14	7	21	-16	49
18 Boreham Wood	42	12	12	18	-13	48
19 Margate	42	13	7	22	-13	46
20 Harlow Town	42	13	6	23	-16	42
21 Heybridge Swifts	42	10	11	21	-22	41
22 Ramsgate	42	8	11	23	-32	31



CENTRE STAGE: David Mayes, centre, had the best start to his GT career at Silverstone

Mayes secures debut GT win at Silverstone circuit

STAPLEHURST driver David Mayes made the best possible start to his GT career, by winning on his debut at Silverstone last weekend.

The reigning Caterham Superlight Champion qualified on pole by over a second from his nearest rival and was quicker than a number of more powerful cars.

The 20-year-old then took the chequered flag in the first main race, despite having only minimal experience in the class.

"The GT format is very different from what I am used to in single seaters," he said. "The grid is made up of four different power classes so you have to focus on who you are racing, add rolling starts, slick tires and a roof and it feels completely different. I couldn't believe how hot it got in the car."

Mayes earned his drive in the LKM

Porsche 996 after winning last year's Caterham title, but his testing plans were thrown into disarray when he was only able to drive the car for four laps around Donington at the end of last season.

Mayes had just 15 minutes of practice time before qualifying began, but said: "We were lucky to get any racing at all – the organisers did a fantastic job."

The man who first spotted Mayes' potential, local businessman Gary Eastwood, was denied the class victory in race two when his car's front splitter broke early in the race, with just over a second separating the top three finishers at the flag.

The duo will be back in action this weekend at the A1 GP meeting at Brands Hatch.

Mayes earned his drive in the LKM

MOTORSPORT

FOOTBALL



ROLE MODELS: Ashley Ulph and Chris Smalling have put a positive focus on Maidstone youth team players

Carter joins growing list of success stories from youth squad

A YEAR after Chris Smalling made the jump from the Ryman Premier Division to the Premier League, Maidstone United are basking in the reflected glory of seeing another of their youth team players earn England Schoolboy honours.

Rob Carter is the fourth graduate of the Stones youth set-up to receive an England call in the past three seasons, following Smalling, who subsequently joined Fulham, Ashley Ulph and Sam Morrison.

The understandably delighted coach Tony Cornwell said: "It is a great achievement for the club and the coaching system. Obviously credit has to go to Kent schools and the Kent FA, but for a club to produce four in a short space of time shows we have a very good youth structure and players recognise the opportunity Maidstone United can provide."

Carter, who played for England in the Centenary Shield tournament joined United from Dartford, after seeing the others progress.

"He had seen the success of Chris Smalling and Ashley Ulph and felt Maidstone was the right place to progress his career," Cornwell said. "In many ways there is no secret to our success and I think when you have one player get through to the England Schoolboys people start to take notice."

Ulph has become a first-team regular, while Morrison made his league debut against Billericay and was one of a number of players praised by club chairman Paul Bowden-Brown. "It could have been very difficult for us today, but the young players we had out there did us proud."

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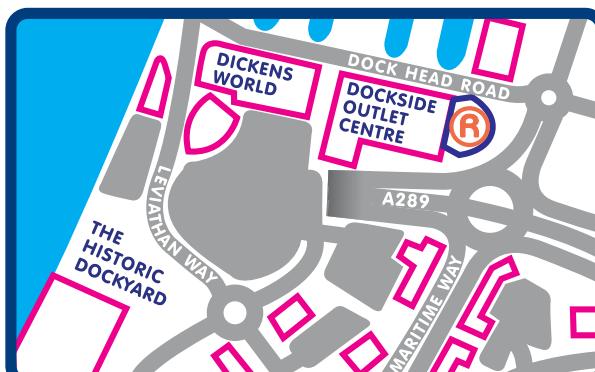
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